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Romantic-Nationalism and Ballad Scholarship

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ROMANTIC-NATIONALISM AND BALLAD SCHOLARSHIP A LESSON FOR TODAY FROM NORWAY'S PAST

by W. Edson Richmond

WITH THE POSSIBLE exception of the United States and Canada, there is hardly a country in the world which has not at some time in its history used the songs sung by its people as evidence of their genius, of their racial unity, and of their need for national identity. Ballad and folksong scholarship in most of Western Europe had its genesis in such beliefs, and it seems safe to say that had it not been for the spirit of romantic nationalism which engulfed Europe in the middle years of the nineteenth century, the study of folksong would be in its infancy today. Indeed, in parts of the modern world, romantic nationalism masquerading as proletarian realism is still a controlling factor in folksong study. The pages of Rumanian folklore journals are crammed with articles which point out how Rumanian folksongs illustrate the socialistic genius of the Rumanian people,¹ and the books and periodicals published in such other iron-curtain countries as Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland are only slightly less chauvinistic in their approach.² Nevertheless, contemporary romantic nationalism is a relatively weak force enervated by pragmatism, science, and the United Nations. It was not a weak force in the nineteenth century!

¹See, for example, Ion. Const. Chitimia, "Poezia populara narativa: Balada," *Studii si Cercetari de Istorie Literara si Folclor*, VI:3-4 (1957), 595-651; M. Grosu, "Caracterul general istoric al baladei populare rominesti," *Revista de Folclor*, III:3 (1958), 39-50.

²Cf. Andrej Melicherčik, *Slovenský Folklór: Chrestomatia* (Bratislava: Slovenska Akadémia Vied, 1959), esp. pp. 15-43; B. Zolnai, "Contributions a l'histoire des termes 'ballade' et 'romance'," *Acta Linguistica* [Hungary], VII: 3-4 (1958), 217-243.

Romanticism, in the hands of nineteenth century nationalists, emphasized social, linguistic, and political cleavages. Especially was this true in Norway where after centuries of subservience to Denmark and the political vacuum resulting from the weak union with Sweden after the Napoleonic wars, Norwegians rediscovered themselves. Of necessity, the rediscoverers turned to the distant past and to the peasant culture, for the recent past and urban culture were shot through with Danish influence and, even worse, with classical and Latin influence. The *bønder*, on the other hand, were thought to have maintained a direct line to the antique past unpolluted by the decadent strains of foreign cultures and literatures. It was in an atmosphere such as this that true ballad scholarship began in Norway.

The first Norwegian ballad scholars, Jørgen Moe and Pastor M. B. Landstad, were not directly concerned with political distinctions as were most of their contemporaries in the fields of history, literature, and linguistics. They were, however, actively and directly concerned with social and linguistic patterns, and they made the differences between *bønder* and city-dweller serve as a foundation for their scholarship. Unlike their British predecessors, Thomas Percy and Sir Walter Scott, neither Moe nor Landstad wished to polish and reword popular poetry to suit the tastes of an educated public; they wished instead to strip the superficial veneer from the public itself so that it might learn to read and appreciate the unadorned peasant product which they felt was the true heritage of all Norwegians. Popular poetry, they felt, had a vigor, spirit, and power allied to the virility of the countryside and far superior to the preciousness of the hybrid literature then current in the cities.

The first volume of folkloristic materials to be edited in this spirit was Jørgen Moe's *Samling af Sange, Folkviser og Stev i norske Almuedialekter* (*A Collection of Songs, Ballads, and Stev in Norwegian Popular Dialects*) which was published in 1840 by the house of P. T. Mallings. As a collection of folksong it left much to be desired, for less than one-third of the poems which it included came from the people themselves. The bulk of materials consisted of dialect poems by such well known authors as Wergeland, Edvard Storm, and Hans Hanson. In 1848 the volume was re-issued with a new title, *Norske Viser og Stev i Folkesproget*. No real improvements were made, and the changes were hardly more significant than the revised title: a few songs were omitted, a few were added, and Professor P. A. Munch supplied a foreword in which he explained that the spelling of certain words had

been altered ". . . in accordance with the spirit of the language."³ Faulty as they were, however, and though they received little or no critical acclaim in Norway, Moe's booklets had a twofold importance: first, they showed the feasibility of presenting dialect poetry in a modification of conventional orthography, and, second, they proved that ballads and other folk poetry were still alive in Norway.

These contributions were, however, in the nature of *obiter dicta* and suggestive rather than conclusive. They were intuitively rather than rationally developed. Moreover, in spite of the highly laudatory words Jørgen Moe employed to describe a lost, native Norwegian literature which fled the mountaintops of Norway to Denmark, ". . . there to be mistreated in French and German,"⁴ he saw the folkloristic materials in his volumes merely as degenerate fragments and the materials by known authors merely as a necessary step in the creation of a new literature in the language of the people. But whether or not he truly appreciated and understood such language is a moot point. He was an educated man of cultivated tastes in love with an abstract idea, and although he identified the dialect of each poem which he printed and frequently glossed dialect words in notes to the various poems, he said nothing about such practical problems in his introduction.

A comparison of the two editions taken in conjunction with Munch's comments in the foreword to the second edition leads one to assume that Moe had inexpertly developed the rudiments of an orthographic system which was more confusing than enlightening to its readers. In other words, Jørgen Moe recognized phonetic differences between country dialects and the Dano-Norwegian of the cities but did not know how to handle them. In slightly less than five years, however, M. B. Landstad was to expand Moe's suggestions and implications into a basic collection of Norwegian ballads and *stev* edited according to systematic principles which, for better or worse, have influenced Norwegian folksong study to the present day.

The history of Pastor Mangus Brostrup Landstad's collection of ballads and *stev* is confused and not always to his credit.⁵ It seems apparent that his work with folksongs was stimulated almost equally by his love of music, by his familiarity with his peasant parishioners,

³Jørgen Moe, *Norske Viser og Stev i Folkesproget*, 2nd ed. (Christiania [Oslo]: P. T. Mallings, 1848), p. ix.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. v.

⁵Knut Liestøl, "M. B. Landstads *Norske Folkeviser*," *Edda*, xxvi (1939), 6-9.

and by the appearance of Jørgen Moe's *Samling of Sange* in 1840. Coincidentally, Landstad appears to have completed the gathering of materials for his volume in the same year in which Moe's second edition was published;⁶ the mechanics of editing and of arranging for a publisher required four more years.

The search for a publisher was difficult partly because there was some question about to whom some of the materials belonged,⁷ partly because Jørgen Moe felt he had prior claims to the subject in general if not to particular ballads, but primarily because publishers felt the work to be a poor financial risk. As had been pointed out earlier, the work of Moe, even when fortified with the authority and popularity of P. A. Munch, had not brought dialect poetry and ballads to immediate popularity. Instead, the public appeared indifferent, and even so nationalistic a scholar as Ivar Aasen was able to answer the question "Norwegian folk ballads, what are they?" with the somewhat deprecatory statement "Some old songs which have been transmitted by word of mouth and to which great importance is ascribed"⁸ when attempting to assist Landstad in his search for public funds. Ballads were popular only in the technical sense!

Nevertheless, by 1852 a publisher, Chr. Tønsberg, had been found and Landstad had developed an editorial system⁹ which was to influence all subsequent ballad study in Norway. In following years whether scholars agreed or disagreed with Landstad, they could not ignore his edition which has a place in the history of Norwegian ballad studies similar to that held by the volumes published in Denmark by Svend Grundtvig and the volumes published in America by Francis James Child.

⁶M. B. Landstad, *Norske Folkeviser* (Christiania [Oslo]: Chr. Tønsberg, 1853), p. iii.

⁷A large portion of the materials published by Landstad were apparently collected by Frk. Olea Crøger who had herself been eager to see them in print. At one time, in 1842, she put her texts in the hands of P. T. Malling, and later she gave them to Jørgen Moe who was reluctant to return them even after pastoral duties require more and more of his time. Cf. Knut Liestøl, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

⁸Quoted in Oscar J. Falnes, *National Romanticism in Norway* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1933), p. 239.

⁹That the system was the result of considerable thought and experimentation is shown not only by the introduction to *Norske Folkeviser* but also by Landstad's exploratory article which served as a sample of what he intended to do and was an implied invitation for both assistance and criticism. See M. B. Landstad, "Prøver af Folkeviser samlede i Øvre Thelemarken." *Norsk Tidsskrift for Videnskab og Litteratur*, III (1849), 329-375. A comparison of the samples printed in this article with the same ballads as they appear in the edition itself reveals the development of Landstad's interest in antiquity.

Moreover, the prophet was recognized in his own time and in his own country. *Norske Folkeviser* was hailed with enthusiasm even by such men as P. A. Munch whose relationship with Jørgen Moe had led him to believe that Landstad could not be trusted with work so foreign to his profession. When the volume was published, however, Munch led a host of other critics in extravagant praise.¹⁰ Perhaps the sometimes excessive enthusiasm for the work arose simply because the time was ripe, because the romantic nationalism of the intelligentsia had finally permeated the thought patterns of the middle classes, but more probably the enthusiasm was generated simply by the size and excellence of the volume. Here were 920 pages containing 123 ballads, 532 stev, a number of children's rhymes and game verses, and musical notation for eighty-five of the songs: proof indeed that Norway was richly endowed with hitherto undiscovered treasures.

The very magnitude of Landstad's *Norske Folkeviser* was ammunition for romantic nationalists who found in it evidence to support their faith in the antiquity of Norwegian culture and proof that this culture had been kept alive not in the cities where, they insisted, it had first been submerged and later destroyed by foreign influence but in the countryside among untutored, and thus unsullied, peasants. Indeed, the editorial principles developed by Landstad did much to support such half-truths inasmuch as they were basic to Landstad's own thought.

Before the principles and implications of Landstad's editorial system are discussed, however, it should be pointed out that his volume made some very positive contributions to international ballad study. For example, among the volumes of folksong published in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, Landstad's *Norske Folkeviser* is almost unique in its nearly complete dependence upon materials gathered from oral tradition and in its identification of the individual singers. These were songs sung by the people with whom Landstad and Olea Crøger, to whom Landstad was indebted for much of his material, had lived. As a result, the collection was not limited to a particular kind of song but included along with the apparently medieval ballads and stev, along with obviously ancient lullabies and game songs, some twenty items in a section entitled "Newer Songs of Mixed Content" in recognition of the fact that the people themselves did not distinguish one type of song from another. And finally, Landstad

¹⁰An account of Munch's reaction extracted from his collected writings appears in Oscar J. Falnes' *National Romanticism in Norway*, p. 243.

recognized, as his more illustrious Danish colleague, Svend Grundtvig, never did, that the items which he printed were not merely poems, they were songs as well and should be treated as such. Thus, to the end of the volume and with the assistance of L. M. Lindeman, who was himself to make a major contribution to the study of Norwegian folk music, he appended musical notation for over half of the ballads which he printed, even going to the extent of noting variant tunes for some of the items. Though Lindeman had also contributed musical notation for a portion of the materials in Jørgen Moe's second edition, Landstad's collection can safely be called the second major edition of true folksong to have the music included, having been preceded only by the magnificent Swedish collection of Geijer and Afzelius.¹¹

The dependence upon oral tradition, the identification of individual singers, the inclusion of more than simply the antique ballad, and the recognition of the importance of music are considerable virtues and are, in themselves, sufficient justification for Landstad's influence on subsequent editors. But *Norske Folkeviser* has shortcomings, some of which are the direct result of Landstad's profession and some of which are of a more general nature. Neither an active Lutheran pastor nor the daughter of a pastor, as was Frk. Crøger, is the ideal collector of folksongs: there are too many songs which are not suited for singing in such company. The mere identification of a singer by his name and a notation of the district in which he lived in is but one step better than no identification at all. And, finally, no description is given of the situation in which the songs were sung despite the fact that Peter Christen Asbjørnsen had indicated the value of painting such a living picture as early as 1845 when he published his very popular and vivid *Norske Huldreeventyr og Folksagn*. But this is quibbling, for Landstad should hardly be criticized for failing to do what few ballad scholars have learned to do even today.

More important and significant criticism must fall upon Landstad's editorial principles which are both the glory and the failure of his edition of folksongs collected in Norway. In appearance, the book might well be a modern edition of ballads. Each folksong text is accompanied by extensive explanatory notes which are most frequently at the bottom of the pages but which in some cases are in the form of head- or end-notes. Moreover, the information contained in these notes is similar to that found in modern collections: the source of the song

¹¹E. G. Geijer and A. A. Afzelius, *Svenska folkvisor*, 3 vols., supplementary volume of airs (Stockholm: 1814-1816).

is given, its narrative is placed in the perspective of history and folklore, references are made to versions found in the other parts of the world insofar as Landstad knew of them, and individual words and expressions are explicated. In addition to such notes, variant texts are given for thirteen of the songs. Strictly speaking, Landstad did not create this pattern for an edition himself; similar materials can be found in the volumes published by Scott, Jamieson, and Ritson in the British Isles and in the previously mentioned volumes published by Geijer and Afzelius in Sweden; but Landstad introduced the pattern to Norway and it has been followed in all subsequent scholarly editions of Norwegian balladry even to the present day.¹²

In theoretical terms, however, Landstad's editorial principles fall short of modern standards in two ways, both of which are at least in part a result of his romantic nationalism. In his desire to prove the excellence and antiquity of Norwegian balladry, he reconstituted many texts and he developed an orthographic system which gave an unduly ancient appearance to all of his materials.

In the process of collecting songs, Landstad had been especially impressed with the number of fragmentary pieces which came to his hand. He had been equally impressed with the variant forms of particular ballads which he collected in different places.¹³ This had quite naturally and correctly led him to the belief that centuries of oral transmission had mangled some items beyond recognition and had caused others to be preserved in different ways in different parts of the country. As a result, he saw as one of the requirements of his edition a necessity to perform ". . . the precarious work of reconstructing a whole."¹⁴ A recent comparison of a sample ballad text from *Norske Folkeviser* with his manuscripts which were rediscovered in the 1920's has shown that:

Landstad was concerned that the texts he gave should be honest and built upon tradition. But, in addition, he allowed himself to be guided by the romantic idea that behind the variants stood an original song which had fallen into decay and that if one were able to select the stanzas with the oldest words and expressions and were able to select stanzas from different versions, he would be able to reconstruct the original.¹⁵

¹²See, for example, Olav Bø and Svale Solheim, *Folkeviser ved Knut Liestøl og Moltke Moe*, 2 vols. (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, *Norsk Folkediktning VI and VII*, 1958-1959).

¹³Landstad, *Norske Folkeviser*, pp. vii-viii.

¹⁴*ibid.*, p. viii.

¹⁵Odd Nordland, "Folkevise-tradisjon i Telemark i 1840-Åra og Landstads Restitusjonsmetode," *Norveg*, 6 (1958), 290.

Thus many of the ballads found in Landstad's edition are not exact reproductions of the texts which he and Frk. Crøger had collected from oral tradition. They are, instead, composite texts, every stanza of which came directly from the mouths of the people but not always from the same singer or even from the same place.

As a result, the ballad texts found in Landstad's *Norske Folkeviser* are often highly effective pieces of poetry of considerable esthetic merit, but even though each stanza of each text came from tradition, the combined effect is false. Often the narrative is far more complete than it was in any one of the variants from which the composite was developed, and sometimes Landstad's desire to include all of the motifs found in all of the variants in his possession led him to use stanzas of similar content from many sources and thus unconsciously to imply that repetition was a far stronger poetic device than it actually was.

Landstad's system of spelling also grew out of the roots of his romantic nationalism. He was absolutely certain that the language of ballads was a direct development of Old Norse "... more or less purely preserved."¹⁶ Unfortunately, however, he had no guide for the reproduction of ballad language upon the printed page. In his own words, "One of the greatest difficulties for me with this work was the language; not so much its understanding as its correct spelling."¹⁷ He recognized the difficulty of reproducing the dialect of upper Telemark in a modification of conventional Dano-Norwegian orthography, a difficulty compounded by the fact that the pronunciation of everyday speech varied from area to area within Telemark itself. Were he to reflect these differences by the substitution of certain letters of the alphabet for those found in the conventional spelling system, the result, he pointed out, would be a "barbaric appearance."¹⁸ No doubt fortified by his apparent success in reconstructing the more ancient form of the texts, he finally decided "... to accommodate the spelling to the Old Norse language, and to consider the etymology of the words."¹⁹ The results of such a system were not the barbaric unintelligibility that he feared if the Telemark dialect had been accurately reproduced; instead, *mirabile dictu*, the ballads in print appeared to be in a language close to and directly descended from Old Norse! This appearance was strengthened by the substitution of the letter ð for the

¹⁶Landstad, *Norske Folkeviser*, p. 711, n. 1.

¹⁷*ibid.*, pp. viii-ix.

¹⁸*ibid.*, p. ix.

¹⁹*ibid.*, p. ix.

letters *t* or *d* in special situations, and by a compromise between conventional spelling and Old Norse spelling in some few particular words.²⁰

It is little wonder, therefore, that Landstad concluded his introduction to *Norske Folkeviser* with the following words:

It is a bard from the 14th and 15th centuries who is knocking at the people's door. For a long time he has concealed himself in mountain huts; may he not frighten people now when he descends to the great city clad in his strange clothing.²¹

Strange clothing indeed! It was clothing which had been scrounged from the attic. Moreover, it hid the natural beauty of the body it covered from the eyes of many who felt that popular poetry and song was its own excuse for being. Thus, only five years later, in 1858, the very practical scholar Sophus Bugge published a brief edition of twenty-eight ballads with the specific intention of neutralizing some of the effects of Landstad's editorial principles.²² Despite Bugge's reservations, however, Landstad's edition supported the romantic nationalists in their contention that the common people of Norway had once created and still preserved a magnificent literature. After 1853 Landstad turned more and more to his pastoral duties; after 1858 Sophus Bugge concentrated his attention upon support of Svend Grundtvig's *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser* to which he contributed innumerable Norwegian texts; consequently, Landstad's *Norske Folkeviser* remained the standard edition of Norwegian ballads until Knut Liestøl and Moltke Moe published their own popular edition in the second decade of the twentieth century.²³

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²⁰*ibid.*, pp. x-xi. The Anglo Saxon thorn letter was used at the end of syllables and between vowels as a substituted for an unpronounced *d*; as a substitute for a *t* when it was a definite neuter ending; and in a few other special situations.

²¹*ibid.*, p. xix.

²²Sophus Bugge, *Gamle Norske Folkeviser* (Kristiania [Oslo]: Feilberg and Landmark, 1858). Note especially p. iv on which Bugge says that he included only traditional verse previously unpublished, that he has not reconstructed texts without careful indication of the fact, and that, above all, he has not attempted to create a normalized speech pattern. Instead, he has developed an orthographic system which allows him to present his texts as an exact reflection of the way they appear in the mouths of the people.

²³Knut Liestøl og Moltke Moe, *Norske Folkevisor*, 3 vols. (Kristiania [Oslo]: Jacob Dybwad, 1920-1924). Intended primarily as a popular edition for school use and general reading, this edition was revised in 1958-1959 by Olav Bø and Svale Solheim [see note 12 above]. A manuscript collection of over 200 distinct

ballads with many variants of each can be found at the Norwegian Folklore Collection in the University Library in Oslo. These materials were collected in the last half of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth century by Sophus Bugge, Hans Ross, Knut Liestøl and others. Using the manuscript collection as a basis, Knut Liestøl was working upon a scholarly edition of Norwegian ballads at the time of his death in the early 1950's. He had completed an introduction, which will probably be published in 1961 or 1962, and had finished the editorial work for about one-third of the separate texts. Recently his work has been taken up again and it is probable that in the next few years a truly definitive edition of Norwegian ballads will appear to take the place of Landstad's *Norske Folkeviser*.

RUNNING CONTRABAND ON THE RIO GRANDE

by
HALDEEN BRADDY

One summer night an automobile sped rapidly down the Texas highway out of Sierra Blanca toward El Paso. Its driver, Mrs. Grace W., did not at first notice that a government car had trailed her when she turned north from the Rio Grande to intersect Highway 80. After she headed west for the Pass, her pursuer turned on the speed, quickly overtaking her outside of Fabens.

"What's the hurry?" the border patrolman asked.

"No hurry," Mrs. W. replied.

"What's that you got in the back?" the officer questioned.

"Nothing," Mrs. W. replied. "Just empty gunny sacks. I carried some grain for the stock down to the farm and was just on the way home. What's up?"

"We are looking for a woman. A lot of wet Mexicans are coming in right now to gather the crops or work as maids."

"Oh, yeah!" Mrs. W. said, irritated. "Well, I can tell you there's nobody with me. I got a maid, all right, but she has a pass and goes home to Juarez every night. You don't catch me hauling her all around the country or out of the state, much less bringing her across the river. I'm not breaking any law, you know."

"Pardon me, madam. We have to check, you know. You're O.K. Go on home now, but watch your speed," the patrolman said, climbing back in his car and watching her start away somewhat less precipitately than before.

That is how it happens some of the time, but not how it happens much of the time. Border rangers stay forever on the alert along the Rio Grande. They do not annoy innocent citizens, but these citizens often are not as cooperative as they should be. Over the years women "runners" have outnumbered male smugglers, so that the policeman's interest in Mrs. W. had a basis in experience to support it. Generally, border officials seldom question river crossers without reason, or "make a strike" without effect. Their eyes, however, must be everywhere at once: on aliens, ammunition, cowhides, guns, horses, jewelry, metals, narcotics, parrots, perfume, spies, undesirables, watches, and yearlings

prone to stray—in a word, on everything. The cause for this is of course close at hand. "Importing" ranks as a very old business on the Texas-Mexico line.

II

During the Mexican Revolution and indeed until his death in 1923, the rebel Pancho Villa virtually hypnotized most of his countrymen with fear. When he rampaged up and down the Rio Grande at the outbreak of hostilities, he frightened many Mexicans into smuggling their cattle and anything else they had, including prostitutes, across the border into Texas. In *Them Was the Days* (1925) Owen P. White told how whoremasters brought "wet" totsies across the river, setting up business on the Texas side, first at Presidio, then at Shafter, and finally at El Paso. The Mexicans, scared within an inch of their lives by the bloody tales of the murderous Villa, sold everything they had or could lay their hands on. They sold this produce, chattels or women, cheap. They knew Pancho would confiscate whatever he ran into.

That was the era of "Chink runners" and "yellow goodsmen." Pancho Villa so mistreated the Chinese in Chihuahua that they hired smugglers to convey them to the United States. Numbers of them reached the northern banks of the Rio safely, but most of the Chinese had to leave their possessions in Mexico, in the clutch of the rebels.

"Chink running" was brisk around 1909 until smugglers killed an American border patrolman. It seemed impossible to discover the identity of his murderer. The head of the ring in Juarez was a wealthy Chinaman who sported a big diamond ring. He took great pride in the ring. American agents induced a pretty young *gringa* woman to become the Chinaman's girl and steal the ring from him. She did so. The American agents then traded the diamond back to the Chinaman in exchange for information that led to the arrest and execution of the smuggler who had killed one of their respected immigration agents.

Needing munitions in 1913 to carry on his revolution, Villa himself smuggled an unknown but large amount of valuable ore out of Mexico to trade for war supplies in Texas. In *The Brides of Capote* (1950) Noel L. Keith recorded how Villa took over the fabulous riches of General Louis Terrazas, in his epoch "the undisputed dictator of Chihuahua," and smuggled the Terrazas gold into the Big Bend country. According to Keith, Villa also rushed silver out of Mexico in those days: "J. Y. Basking and A. H. Burke were bringing out two heavily

loaded mule trains with more than a half-million dollars in silver bars from the Alvarado Mining Company of Parral and the Inde Mining Company. The two mule trains crossed to the Texas side of the Rio Grande into Presidio at the same time."

Much more of this kind of business went on during that era in the Big Bend and all along the Rio Grande. Most of the Big Benders want to forget the smuggling as well as the later raids by the Mexican rebels at Ojinaga and the Brite ranch. Repeated inquiries in that area about a "wet embargo" have gleaned the fact that other instances of large-scale "border running" then occurred; but the details must be omitted. Too many people in places too high were involved "hand in glove" with Villa in the Big Bend.

About 1918 Pancho Villa tried his luck elsewhere, attempting to sell Mr. Vince Andreas; a well-known citizen of El Paso several wagon-loads of silver ingots. Mr. Andreas made him an offer, twenty cents on the dollar valuation, if Villa would make lawful delivery on the Texas side, but the bandit wanted more money and declined. Some say Villa buried this silver in Mexico near the town of Villa Ahumada; others believe that he crossed the river and buried it on Texas soil between Fabens and Ysleta. At that time a price had been placed on Villa's head. In order to encourage his men to betray him, the Mexican government offered a reward of one thousand dollars for his capture, dead or alive. Always leery of everybody, including his own treacherous gang, Villa may have regarded Texas as a safer place than Mexico for hiding his treasures.

Of treasures, Pancho Villa had an abundance. He got money from kidnapping *gringos* and holding them for ransom, from butchering the Chinese and rifling their pockets, from forcibly entering Mexican homes or offices and ransacking them of money or heirlooms, and from putting the bite, *la mordida*, on everybody he could.

Mr. Jimmie Caldwell, now of Santa Fe, New Mexico, qualifies as the best possible eye-witness to the opulence of Pancho Villa. Once the bandit's foreman at Canutillo, Mr. Caldwell supplied the ranch with American tractors and threshing combines, in return for which he always received payment in gold. On one order of \$17,000 Villa delayed payment so long that Mr. Caldwell was obliged to screw his courage to the sticking place and ask for the money. When he made his request, Villa told him that he would be paid in a day or two, as soon as he got back from a trip into the Sierra Madre. True to his promise, Villa returned to the ranch two days later and had his men

unload a heavy trunk from a wagon bed into the house. There Caldwell counted out the amount due him from a trunk filled with twenty dollar gold pieces. After counting out his \$17,000, he started to show Villa how much he had taken, but the bandit dismissed him: "O.K.; *es nada.*"

All the gold stories—those cited and those hinted at by informers afraid to have them printed—underline one impression on the reader indelibly: Villa smuggled more gold out of Mexico than any living person now knows or is willing to say. In a confession made in Mexico City in 1912 Villa said himself that he had buried silver in Santa Barbara and that he knew where another treasure lay in the basement of a house in Parral. For this reason, more credence should have been given, in 1955, to Dolores Vasquez than she received. On August 6, 1955, Dolores Vasquez, a purported nurse with Villa's army, told the United Press that Pancho buried smuggled gold at "Cinenia" (possibly the King Ranch), Corpus Christi, Robstown, Roma, and San Antonio. However that may be, he certainly cached some of it in the Big Bend and in or around El Paso.

The days of Pancho Villa, now past, constitute an incomplete history. His daredevil tactics set the tempo for all future "border running," and his ghost still walks the Rio Grande today, threatening and big as life. He galvanized everybody he met with fright, with an ineradicable fear. Many of his doings therefore remain a mystery, a closed door one does not venture to open.

III

During Prohibition El Pasoans went over to Juarez, not only to drink, but to bring home large supplies of contraband liquor. For a while it was sold in Juarez on the streets to customers in the traffic lines bound for the Texas side. When Mexican authorities tightened down in 1930, "rum runners" came into the picture, engaging the police in pitched gun battles while smuggling their merchandise over the river. Nineteen federal officers were killed between 1919 and 1932 in gunfights with "rummers." The dead smugglers never were totalled up.

The talk of the border in the era of Prohibition centered on a place called "The Hole in the Wall." The original "Hole in the Wall"—all such places were later so named—had its location southeast of El Paso on a spot of Mexican earth near the town of San Elizario. A nondescript building set in a kind of garden, this "Hole in the Wall"

contained two or three long narrow tables, plenty of plain chairs, and two stuffed camels of life-size, one at each long side of its only otherwise unadorned room. Here the *Paseños* of yesterday foregathered to drink their *copitas*, to swig their *tequila* with salt and lemon. Here they also purchased a few spare bottles of drinking whiskey and tried to return unapprehended to the Texas side. The appropriateness of its name derived from the fact that "The Hole in the Wall" became the easiest place to penetrate the barrier created by the United States government to prevent the illegal transportation of liquor into Texas.

The one near San Elizario became, then, the first "Hole in the Wall." Its patrons included rich and influential men of that area who did not welcome interference from the customs men. Those patrons did not smuggle liquor to sell it for a profit but to allay their own recurring thirst. According to one customs agent, who prefers to remain anonymous, it was not a smart move to arrest a patron who brought only a bottle or two across the river for his own use. In those days such an action carried the law too far, arousing the animosity of the local citizens and sometimes incurring the criticism of the agency itself. The anonymous informant said that one wealthy farmer whom he apprehended made it so "hot" for him that he almost lost his job. Custom agents were supposed to concentrate on criminal "rum runners" and leave respectable parties alone.

Vanished glories of Prohibition included a Hole in the Wall on Cordova Island at the foot of Eucalyptus Street. Cordova Island came into being as a result of the flood in July, 1897. According to Mr. O. C. Coles, a veteran El Paso realtor, the flood on the Texas side extended from the International Bridge to Washington Park, backing up water to the downtown districts, so that Mayor Magoffin arranged for the digging of a channel which created Cordova Island when the Rio Grande then straightened its course. This Hole stood about three hundred feet from the boundary line, in easy reach of thirsty international travelers brave enough to recross to Texas after a "wetting" and face the Border Patrol, Customs Service, and City Police who kept a close watch there.

In that period Mr. Alfonso Mendez, Senior, worked as a cab driver for the old City Service Company. On April 8, 1956, Mr. Mendez described in the *El Paso Times* how during Prohibition he often drove fares to the foot of Eucalyptus Street, where they walked across the international line to refresh themselves.

On Saturday night and all day Sunday where there was a big crowd of crossers, the City Police used to park the Black Maria there; and if you came back *muy boracho*, they would put you in it. When they got a full load, they would take you to jail.

In the same issue of the *Times* a former federal officer, who declined to have his name used, also remembered well the various "holes," especially one on Fabens Island. He declared there was little smuggling at these points, not nearly so much as at the bridges.

Sometimes we'd catch some guy with a pint, but most of the patrons were content to bring their liquor back inside them. We kept a pretty close eye on them. I've seen men and women in evening dress going and coming to them, but those were special events like New Year's Eve when somebody would be having a party and run out of liquor.

Officials certainly had plenty of trouble enforcing the law during Prohibition. Female informers, "squawk women," might give them a reliable clue, a "third rail"; but "rummers" became specialists at illegally importing prohibited liquors and grew rich enough to bribe judges, or "rum beaks," who set them free. A crafty smuggler of the day, called "Nellie the Booze Queen," became adept at eluding the law and grew rich from fat profits.

The Repeal Amendment in 1933 rendered the smuggling of liquor obsolete, its illegal flow dying down to a trickle. Today smugglers of pure grain alcohol are now and again arrested. Evidently there are still people who prefer "white whiskey" to "store-boughten" stuff. In the magazine *Cavalier* (May, 1956) Mickey Spillane described how he rode with hot-rod "Moonshiners" in North Carolina. On the Mexican border it is best to stay clear of "white" liquids. Odorless, colorless, and tasteless, such liquids contain the equivalent of deadly hashish. After a drinker swallows a glass of the stuff, he suddenly goes boi-ing! There is a much bigger business than "rum running" in El Paso today.

IV

Recent smuggling at the Pass has centered on five significant commodities. These five comprise, in ascending order of importance, aliens, watches or their springs, war materials, jewelry, and narcotics. Facts about running these contraband goods appeared in *American Speech* (May, 1956); these now may be reviewed together with newer evidence.

Attempts to bring aliens and enemy spies into Texas have now sharply declined, due to the efficiency of the F.B.I. Occasionally visitors from out of town still try to smuggle "*perdidas*" (prostitutes) across the river. There continue to be a few housemaids unlawfully entering Texas, not from the new Cordova Bridge, but from Cordova Island, a Mexican area north of the Rio Grande. These rather harmless crossings, effected by "amusers," or accomplices, have always occurred throughout the Texas-Mexico country and constitute no serious menace to America.

As for watches, the premium is on those of Swiss manufacture, and the probability is that these rarely come into the Southwest in "bundles," or large quantities. There exists some traffic, however, in "buttons," or small amounts. An exception occurred in 1956, when a Mexican national was captured with close to \$40,000 in contraband watches. A different condition holds true for jewelry, particularly precious diamonds, which usually do not come to El Paso overland from Mexico, but go to New York City, the diamond center, by sea or air routes from Belgium or Brazil.

Instruments of war, on the other hand, pose another question and return the focus, importantly, to the Southwest. Importations into Mexico from the United States, happening as they do with some regularity, were particularly serious during the recent emergency of the Korean conflict. Today, in a time of peace, war munitions continue to be passed illegally across the International line, throughout the Southwest as well as at Tijuana, Baja California, so that "gun running" appears a steady phenomenon of the borderland.

Corruption among erring policemen of both El Paso and Juarez has not helped matters. Late in 1954 two gun-packing Mexican officers crossed to El Paso from Juarez in a stolen automobile and created a disturbance, on the Texas side at the juncture of Copia and Pershing Streets. When apprehended, the "hopped-up" Mexican policemen, or "arms," were found to have hidden their contraband *marijuana* cigar-

ettes in their car where it had stalled. In April of 1955 a top newspaper reporter exposed the mad narcotic orgies then regularly occurring at the city jail in El Paso itself. Soon afterwards, on June 19, three thieves broke into Shain's Jewelry Store, or "ice palace," in downtown El Paso and stole \$1700 worth of valuables, or "collat" (*i.e.*, collateral). Upon his capture, one of them confessed that he smuggled the loot to Juarez and there traded it for heroin to a Mexican dope ring.

Yet later, pregnant Pat Arthur, in the Juarez jail on the charge of murdering Mr. Arreola, issued from her prison cell on the arm of a Juarez police official (theoretically to help him and others "finger" men in the drug racket, but actually to dine, dance, and disport themselves). This American girl had given Mr. Arreola a photograph of herself and had written thereon the salutation to my "Silver King," or "Silver Ring." Whatever the key word was, her nocturnal sortie has never been satisfactorily explained. Did "aureole" refer to ring? Was she an unwitting "leg" in this aureole, or dope ring?

V

Smuggling, centrum of many ills corroding border culture, may appear in some instances as relatively inoffensive. Anyone who sneaks by the busy customs men at rush hours without paying duty on a taxable product becomes guilty of a crime thereby. Such petty "border running" is termed "jam." Minor offenders comprise men of the type who cheat on their income taxes or women of the sort who can not resist a bargain or a sale. Women are rumored to be talented at selecting "annexations," quantities of merchandise to be taken over the border, and at concealing "candy," small pieces of jewelery. When a female acts as a criminal lookout, customs men refer to her as "bright eyes," whereas a male spotter may be called almost anything from an "aguador" (water bag) to a "soldier" (one who stands guard). Petty offenders often graduate to professional smuggling, entering thereby a criminal class who speaks an underworld argot. Well equipped and ably organized, professionals do a sizable volume of illegal trafficking each year all along the Mexican border in taxable or prohibited goods.

To "run" merchandise successfully, the "sneaker" (smuggler) needs an "Adam," or partner, one who is an "ace" or a "major"; that is, a man who can be depended on. He further needs a "lagger," or contact man, and, to avoid detection, may hire the services of a "jigger

moll," a female lookout. Sometimes he utilizes a "jacker," an expert at camouflage. Men who wade the river with contraband goods strapped to their backs are identified as "*burros*" or "*mulas*," both being Spanish words for donkeys or mules. If they sleep in the open overnight, they use "Mexican *zarapes*," actually newspapers spread out like a blanket. A "stop" is a place to "fence goods," and a "swagman," the fellow who receives illicit materials. The "pullers" may be handling "milk ropes," pearl necklaces; "muggles," an impure or poor quality of sap that comes from a marihuana bush; or "the queer," counterfeit money. The place where prohibited goods are assembled before being taken "under the bridge" is designated the "dump." Mail and contraband are received at a "drop."

If the smuggler has any doubts about his operations, he will look for "eels," or spies, in his "ring." He also will seek out the opinion of his "hawks," lookouts. He then may station at a dangerous spot a "walking tree," a watchman. If he still remains worried, he may make a "dry run," a test to discover the whereabouts of his "family men," the sellers of smuggled articles. The really careful operator will send forward a "doaker," a man to draw attention away from the actual smuggling, or, better yet, carry with him a "*prégon*" (proclamation), a pretty girl who draws the eyes of everybody to her own person. What he fears most is a "finger louse," a person who informs for government agents only; or a "red shirt," a man who refuses to obey orders. The phrase to describe a Negro stool-pigeon is "faded bogey." If the operator becomes frightened, he will return to his side of the border in a "bootlegger turn," or in a hurry; for he has respect both for "*chotas*" (suckling lambs), the police, and for "*Los Panchores*" (fat border patrolmen).

Southwestern operators fall into all shades, forms, and descriptions. They will do practically anything to cheat the United States of its import duty—from "planting" a package on the automobile of an innocent party to lining the casket of a dead man with drugs. If they are dope addicts as well as smugglers, as often they are, they may camouflage their own person from top to bottom by hiding "*cachuchos*" (caps or capsules) either under their wigs or in a "rectum stash." A thrill-seeking young Anglo in 1956 hid fourteen marihuana cigarettes under the dash of his car. Still another Anglo lad hid five types of narcotics on his person before crossing the Bridge. Both were caught. They usually are caught—if not by either Border Patrolmen or Customs Inspectors, then by officers of the Bureau of Narcotics. Agents fre-

quently secure information from clues furnished by "bat carriers" or "belchers." Agents also sometimes hire a decoy, whose name is "Conny." The Federal government maintains a well-conducted prison to correct "boneheads," or lawbreakers, at nearby La Tuna, Texas, once they are tried and convicted. This "hutch," with its inmates, or "geezos," is familiarly known on the border as "La Tuna Tech."

The lure of easy cash brings "rum runners" from everywhere to the fabulous Rio Grande. At an early date they used only horses, and some of them still do. In the rough terrain of the southern Trans-Pecos, a wide territory, livestock "stray" from Chihuahua and Coahuila. The "chili chasers," border patrolmen, ride horses when chasing "wet" cattle across arroyos or "biyookies" (bayu + bayuco) and also when "rimming up a gunyon," riding up a canyon. The pursuers attempt to "double team" the pursued. They are bound to catch him if his mount "turns a wildcat," stumbles and falls. But if the horse is not a "dead head," he may save his rider. To escape the vigilant border rangers, a smuggler's horse must travel fast and "lay his belly in the sand." Animal figures of speech evoke more color than symbols for machines. The fast automobiles of present-day smugglers are known, jocosely, as "mule trains."

Thus far, bird symbols for airplanes have apparently not developed; at least none have come to public attention. Airways are, however, the newest routes to be explored by smugglers. In 1954 two violaters of the International Boundary landed with "wet" merchandise at an airfield in their twin-engine Cessna near the Arizona-Mexico border. When arrested, they admitted several other earlier unlawful flights. Testifying before a Senate subcommittee at San Antonio in 1955, Grady Avant, head customs agent at El Paso, said that the border was virtually unprotected from big-time dope importers who fly their drugs across the line for distribution in the United States as well as in Canada. In 1956 General Swing, of the Border Patrol, reported sixteen planes apprehended in the act of international smuggling. Shortly after that, six men were arrested in a conspiracy to fly two million dollars in smuggled gold out of Mexico across the Rio Grande.

Why do drugs rank next only to Communism as a threat to America? They poison the manpower of the armies of tomorrow. They kill off the brains of brilliant men that Communists can not reach for washing in the Orient. Since the dope habit spreads like a contagious disease, it tends to enslave, not the few, but the many. Everywhere prostitution flourishes and where night life runs rampant, there

lodges the breeding place of the dismantlers of Americanism. The battle today, as Averill Harriman once said, is a struggle for man's mind. For winning this struggle, the healthy body stands out as a primary prerequisite. Horror drugs like the Oriental "hiropon," an ephedrine-hydrochloride compound, inactivate the minds of men.

VI

Among elements of society firmly aligned against traffic in dope, law enforcement agencies, newspapers, and church organizations opposed the criminal importers on every side. Border Patrol inspectors recently arrested a woman at the railway station in El Paso. She had in her trunk and suitcase fifty-seven one pound cellophane bags of highly "manicured" marihuana, with a wholesale value of \$22,800 and worth five times as much when made into cigarettes for delivery in major United States cities.

At Laredo and its twin city of Nuevo Laredo the illegal traffic had for its "head" the dread personage known as the Black Angel (*El Angel Prieto*). He did a "heavy" business in contraband drugs. In December, 1957, there occurred a seizure at Menosha, Wisconsin, of \$700,000 of marihuana (in twenty three sugar sacks of thirty pounds each) that originated in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico. A number of years ago El Pablote Gonzalez ruled the narcotics roost in Juarez. When a secret agent killed Gonzalez some years back, his drug ring fell into the grip of his widow, Ignacia Jasso. A nonpareil of the netherworld, she is known around the globe by the diminutive of her Christian name, La Nacha. In her own devious ways La Nacha is as infamous on the Border today as Pancho Villa was in his epoch.

Yet more recently and back at El Paso again, a border dope ring led by a Negro smuggler was punctured through the undercover work of an exceptionally able policeman, Mr. Bill Risley, formerly a Juarez night-club entertainer. This ring had long been feeding a band of high school students. The constant parade of those as well as other narcotic violators at the Federal court drew this comment from United States District Judge R. E. Thomason: "From the cases moving through the courts here, at Eagle Pass, Del Rio, and other places, we don't seem to be making much progress against the narcotics traffic."

Newspapers continued to assail what Judge Thomason designated as the number one problem on the border. El Paso area churches also co-operated fully with the group. So did the Texas Alcohol-Narcotic

Education Incorporation. One of its members, Dr. Walter R. Willis, remarked that the problem was no longer personal, but national. Statistics show, he said, that it had entered the family and influenced the economic life of America.

The most elusive smuggler was the elite criminal who used an airplane. One point stood out clear about solving the narcotics problem: The Old Man had to be brought down from the Mountain. Border fences did not stop him. Senatorial belittling of the situation helped him. This bold robber of the government meant business. His trafficking in drugs aided the enemies of the United States, for he poisoned the sap of future generations in striking down the young.

Texas Western College

RIDDLES FROM NORTH CAROLINA

by
Joseph D. Clark

THE RIDDLES SUBMITTED below were collected by my first-year students in English at North Carolina State College in 1955-56 and 1960-61. With full acknowledgment of their generous assistance, I am offering in this tabulation all that they presented excepting a few off-color specimens, which are available to those with genuine concern about the folkloristic aspects of them.

The compilation, comprising individual riddles and riddle songs, is arranged alphabetically for the most part; it includes some variants and parallels in close association so as to reflect the borrowings that characterize the interplay of folklore. Furthermore, a comparison of these entries is made with similar renditions of them in two monumental texts of folklore, namely, Archer Taylor's *ENGLISH RIDDLES FROM THE ORAL TRADITION* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California, 1951) and *THE FRANK C. BROWN COLLECTION OF NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE, I* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1952).

In the limited correlation with the Taylor and Brown versions, it is apparent that the ancient type of riddle persists both in subject matter and style. The ancient kind is usually enigmatic, allegorical, allusive, and fanciful in expression; the more recent sort is frequently a conundrum, with a play on words, either homonymous or antithetical in detail. In both forms the question-and-answer technique is predominant, although there is considerable usage of the declarative sentence or a mere phrase to imply the direct question. It is evident, too, that the older forms are more poetic, whereas the modern are more prosaic.

Since there is some feeling among scholars that the riddle has not been adequately treated, it appears that the study of riddles from antiquity to the present time should be undertaken with renewed interest, both in the oral tradition and belles-lettres. For instance, Dr. Taylor, perhaps the most distinguished authority in the field, thinks that the riddle as it occurs in literature needs further systematic research. Undoubtedly he would agree to urge the additional collecting of riddles, both old and new, as now circulated in oral forms. This rec-

ommendation also applies to the incidence of the riddle song, a distinct rarity, which has had comparatively little investigation by the folklorists.

I. RIDDLES

1. A. What is that you have a house full and a yard full of, but you cannot get a dishpan full? (Taylor, 1649) —*Air*
 B. Yard full, world full, house full, but you can't get a basket full. —*Air*
 C. A house full, a hole full; you can't catch a bowl full. (Taylor, 1643-4; Brown, 96) —*Smoke*
 D. All around the house and can't catch a cupful. (Taylor, 1643-4) —*Smoke*
2. Down in a dark dungeon,
 I saw a bright light.
 All saddle, all bridle, all ready to fight.
 Silk was the saddle and brass was the bow.
 I've told you his name three times,
 And now you don't know. —*All*
3. What is more innocent than a lamb? (See "The Devil's Nine Questions") —*Baby*
4. A. What is that which no man wishes to have, yet no man would wish to lose? (Taylor, 1593; Brown, 93) —*Baldhead*
 B. He's got it. He don't want it, yet he wouldn't take the world for it. (Brown, 93) —*Baldhead*
5. Ittie, dithy, dotty, it has two heads and one body. (Taylor, 30) —*Barrel*
6. What is the more you put in it the lighter it gets? —*Barrel with holes in it*
7. What is the biggest diamond in the world? —*Baseball diamond*
8. A. What has eighteen legs and catches flies? (Taylor, 271) —*Baseball team*
 B. What has eighteen black legs and catches flies? —*Negro baseball team*
9. A. What has four legs, a head, and a foot, and can't walk? (Taylor 75, 307) —*Bed*
 B. Four legs up, four legs down,
 Soft in the middle and hard all around. (Taylor, 69, 1429) —*Bed*

10. Button, button, what goes around a button? —*Billy Goat*
11. A. First it's white, then it's green,
Then it's red, then it's black all over.
(Taylor, 1373, 1378, 1385, 1561; Brown, 75-6, 91)
—*Blackberry*
- B. Green as grass and grass it ain't,
Red as blood and blood it ain't,
Black as ink and ink it ain't. —*Pokeberry*
12. I have leaves, but I'm no tree. I sometimes have tables, but I'm
no banquet hall. You can digest me if you try hard enough, but
I'm no food. Who am I? —*Book*
13. What is black on the outside, white on the inside? Cock up your
leg and stick it in. (Taylor, 1417) —*Boot*
14. Hippy, tippy, upstairs,
Hippy, tippy downstairs;
Goes all over the house
Comes back and sits in the corner.
(Taylor, 695, 697-8; Brown, 43) —*Broom*
15. Tippy, tippy upstairs,
Tippy, tippy downstairs,
If you don't mind
Tippy will bite you.
(Taylor 338; Brown, 23, 24 [for *hornet*]) —*Wasp*
16. What is yellow, weighs one thousand pounds, and flies?
—*Two 500-pound canaries*
17. Little Nannie Etticoat in her white petticoat and red nose,
The longer she stands the shorter she grows. (Brown, 39-40)
—*Candle*
18. The man that made it didn't need it;
The man that had it didn't want it;
The man that used it didn't know it.
What is it? (Taylor, 1729-35) —*Casket*
19. What soap is the hardest? —*Cast Steel*
20. A. What has four legs and can't walk? (Taylor, 306) —*Chair*
B. What has four legs, but cannot walk? (Taylor, 305) —*Table*
21. Why is a dirty child like flannel?
—*Because it shrinks from washing.*
22. A. Big at bottom, little at top,
Little thing in the middle goes jiggety-gog. (Taylor, 1445-7)
—*Churn*

- B. Big at the bottom, little at the top,
Something in the middle goes flippity flop. (Taylor, 1445-7;
Brown, 82) —*Churn*
- C. Big at the bottom, little at the top,
Pretty little thing that goes flippity flop. —*Churn*
- D. Flat on the bottom, round on the top,
Something in the middle goes flippity-flop. —(*Butter*) *churn*
- E. Big a the bottom, and little at the top,
Something in the middle goes flippy-flop. —(*Hand*) *churn*
23. A. What has two hands and a dirty face and can't wash it?
(Taylor, 283) —*Clock*
- B. What runs, but never walks? (Taylor, 321; Brown, 15, 20)
—*Clock*
24. What time is it when it's 13 o'clock?
—*Time to get your clock fixed*
25. Why did the cow jump over the moon? —*Cold fingers*
26. Why did the little boy take his water colors to bed with him?
—*He wanted color dreams.*
27. What has teeth, but cannot eat? (Taylor, 299) —*Comb*
28. What has eyes and can't see? (Taylor, 317) —*Cook stove*
29. What has ears, but can't hear? (Taylor, 285 with *corn*)
—*Cornfield*
30. What has four legs, two eyes, has fur like a coyote, howls at the
moon, and is made of cement?
—*Coyote; I just threw the cement in to make it hard.*
31. What has 10,000 legs and can't crawl?
—*Five thousand crippled children*
32. What kind of fruit does the electric plant grow? —*Currents*
33. Why did the Indian bury his horse at the bottom of the cliff?
(Brown, 188) —*Because he was dead.*
34. Why can't a man living in Newark, N. J., be buried west of the
Mississippi? —*Because he is not dead.*
35. What is sharper than a thorn? (See note, 3.) —*Death*
36. What is meaner than woman-kind? (See note, 3.) —*Devil*
37. What is the difference between the North Pole and the South
Pole? —*All the difference in the world*

38. A. What is it that the more you cut off the longer it gets?
(Taylor, 1692-3, 1695 with *grave*; Brown, 100, 99 with *hole*) —*Ditch*
B. What is it that the more you cut it, the longer it gets?
—*Ditch*
39. What did the little boy say when his dog fell over he cliff?
—*Doggone*
40. Why is the dog's tail like the heart of a tree?
—*Because it's farthest from the bark.*
41. When is a door not a door? (Brown, 165) —*When it is a-jar.*
42. Why is Ireland likely to become the richest country in the world?
—*(Because its capital is always dublin (Dublin).)*
43. What is softer than silk? (See note, 3.) —*Down*
44. A. Why was the man drinking on the roof of the tavern?
—*Because the drinks were on the house.*
B. Why did John take a ladder to the home of a friend?
—*His friend's drinks were on the house.*
45. A. Twelve men came riding by,
Twelve pears hanging high;
Each took a pear,
And left eleven hanging there. (Brown, 120)
—*One man's name was Each.*
B. Five pears hanging high,
Five men passing by;
Each takes a pear.
How can four pears be left hanging there?
—*One man's name is Each.*
46. I was walking through the fields of grain,
I picked up something that was good to eat;
It was neither flesh nor bone,
And I kept it till it walked alone.
(Taylor, 1237-8; Brown 60-1) —*Egg*
47. The old woman patted it and patted it; the old man dropped his
pants and jumped at it. (Taylor, 1741-2; Brown, 101)
—*Feather bed*
48. What has long legs, short thighs, bald head, and no eyes?
(Taylor, 79-80; Brown 7) —*Fire tongs*
49. Three-part riddle:
What is white and goes clang, clang? —*White clang clanger*
What is green and goes clang, clang? —*Green clang clanger*
What is red and goes clang, clang? —*Fire truck*

50. What tune attracts the most interest? —*Fortune*
51. A. Round as a biscuit, black as a coal,
has a long long tail and little small hole. (Taylor, 1302,
1361) —*Frying Pan*
- B. Round as a biscuit, black as a coal,
A great long tail and a bustin' hide. —*Griddle*
52. What has four wheels and flies? —*Garbage truck*
53. Long, slick, black feller
Pull his cod and hear him beller. (Taylor, 755; Brown, 46)
—*Gun*
54. A. How far can you go in the woods? —*Half Way*
- B. How far can a dog run into the woods? —*Half Way*
55. What is higher than a tree? (See note, 3.) —*Heavens*
56. What is deeper than the sea? (See note, 3.) —*Hell*
57. What is live on both ends and dead in the middle? (Taylor,
1432; Brown, 81) —*Horse, plow, and man.*
58. What has four legs and flies? —*Dead horse*
59. A little *i* with a dot over it. —*i*
60. How do you spell hard water with three letters? (Brown, 137)
—*Ice*
61. What lives in winter and dies in summer and hangs upside down?
—*Icicle*
62. Jack and Jill went up the hill; each had \$1.25. Jill came down
with \$2.50. —*Do you think they went up for water?*
63. Why is a nut like a regiment? —*It has a kernel (colonel).*
64. Love I sit, Love I stand,
Love I hold fast in my hand. (Brown, 104)
—*She killed her dog and used its hide to make seat,
shoes, and gloves.*
65. What does a cow have four of that a girl (woman) has two of?
—*Legs*
66. Why was George Washington buried standing up? (Brown, 188)
—*Because he couldn't lie.*
67. What is the hardest riddle of all?
—*Life, because we all have to give it up.*
68. Roams the fields and the forests, but at night is on the shelf.
(Taylor, 447, 449, 450-2; Brown 25-28) —*Cow's milk*

69. Does a cow give buttermilk?
—*What else can a cow give but-er-milk?*
70. What has four eyes and can't see? (Taylor, 328; Brown, 21)
—*Mississippi*
71. What has five eyes (i's) and is always wet? —*Mississippi River*
72. What is the difference between a person who has been to Niagara Falls, one that hasn't, and a ham sandwich?
—*One has seen a mist, and one has missed a scene. I added the ham sandwich for you to bite on.*
73. What is it that never was or never will be? (Taylor, 1628)
—*Mouse's nest in a cat's ear*
74. I am very polished, but sometimes as brutal as can be. Some curse me, others praise me, and yet I treat all alike. Who am I?
—*Mirror*
75. A. What has an eye, but cannot see? (Taylor, 282) —*Needle*
B. What has only one eye? —*Needle*
76. Old Mother Twitchet had but one eye,
And a long tail that she let fly:
And every time she went through a gap,
She left a bit of her tail in a trap.
(Taylor, 532-3; Brown, 36-7) —*Needle and thread*
77. A. What is black and white and read all over? —*Newspaper*
(Taylor, 1498; Brown, 85)
B. What is black and white and red all over? —*Sunburned zebra*
78. A. If you have two coins in your hands and they total fifty-five cents, and one is not a nickel, what are they?
—*Fifty-cent piece is not a nickel.*
78. B. Two coins add up to a total of fifty-five cents. One coin is not a nickel. What coins are they?
—*Half dollar and nickel; half dollar is not a nickel.*
79. A. If you had ninety sick sheep and one of them died, how many would you have left?
—*Eighty-nine*
B. If I had twenty sick (six) sheep and one died, how many do I have?
—*Nineteen*
80. If papa bull eats three bales of hay a day, and mama bull eats two bales a day, how much hay will baby bull eat a day?
—*No such thing as mama bull*
81. How many letters in the alphabet?
—*Twenty-four; L and M got kicked out for smoking.*

82. If a frog is in the bottom of a thirty-foot well and moves up three feet a day and falls back two at night, how long will it take him to reach the top?
—*Twenty-seven days because he will be out and won't fall back.*
83. If six birds were sitting on a fence and you shot one of them, how many would be left?
—*None*
84. Twenty birds are sitting on a fence; ten of them take a notion to fly away. How many are left on the fence?
—*Twenty; they took a notion to fly, but didn't fly.*
85. There are ten copycats. If one jumps off a cliff, how many will be left?
—*None, because they are copycats.*
86. How many animals of each species did Moses take along on the ark?
—*None; it was Noah's ark.*
87. Washington's wife was washing windows while Washington was winning wars. How many w's in it?
—*None*
88. What is colder than an icebox at the North Pole?
—*Two nudists in a rumble seat.*
89. As I was going to St. Ives,
I met a man with seven wives;
Each wife had seven sacks,
Each sack had seven cats,
Each cat had seven kits.
Kits cats, sacks, and wives—
How many were going to St. Ives? (Brown, 123)
—*One*
90. A farmer had an apple tree that contained apples. He went to the tree to pick his apples, yet when he left the tree he had taken no apples off and left no apples on the tree.
—*The tree contained two apples. He picked one apple and left one apple on the tree.*
91. A. Why did the chicken cross the road? (Brown, 186)
—*To get to the other side.*
B. Why does a chicken go back and far across the road?
—*To get to the other side.*
92. What side of a cat has the most fur? (Brown, 174) *Outside*
93. Why did the little boy take his cow to church?
—*He had heard they had a new pastor.*
94. What can one man carry upstairs that a thousand men can't carry downstairs?
—*Pen*
95. How do you spell blind pig?
—*Pg (leave out i)*

96. What has (many) eyes and cannot see? (Taylor, 277) —*Potato*
97. What goes up and down and never hits the ground?
—*Pump handle*
98. What can a dog have that nothing else can have? —*Puppies*
99. What is long and slim and slender, tickles where it's tender, has no ears, has no nose, but tickles where the hair grows? —*Razor*
100. What has four hundred legs, is green, and eats rocks?
—*A 400-legged, green rock eater*
101. What is big, black, has eight legs and eats rocks?
—*A big, black, eight-legged rock eater*
102. What is the difference between a sewing machine and a kiss?
—*One sews seams nice; the other seems so nice.*
103. What does a man do standing up, a woman sitting down, and a dog on three legs?
—*Shake hands*
104. What has a tongue and can't talk, a heel and can't walk, and eyes and can't see? (Taylor, 296, 311; Brown, 1). —*Shoe*
105. Long, slender, slimy, slick thing. (Taylor, 1466) —*Snake*
106. What is whiter than milk? (See note, 3.) —*Snow*
107. What is full of holes and still holds water? (Taylor, 1424, 1459)
—*Sponge*
108. Why did the little boy put his mother under the doorsteps?
—*He wanted a stepmother.*
109. What word is composed of five letters, from which if you take two one remains?
—*Stone equals one*
110. What is round as a saucer, deep as a cup, yet all the water in the Mississippi can't fill it? (Taylor, 1321, 1333) —*Strainer*
111. What goes all the way around the house and looks into every window, but doesn't make any tracks? (Taylor, 1921) —*Sun*
112. If a plane were flying from Canada to Mexico and crashed in the United States, where would you bury the survivors?
—*You don't bury survivors.*
113. What is the similarity of a teacher and a train conductor?
—*One minds the trains and the other trains the minds.*
114. Twenty white horses on a red hill;
Now they tramp, now they champ,
Now they stand still. (Taylor, 503; Brown, 33)
—*Teeth and gums*

115. What is louder than a horn? (See note, 3.) —*Thunder*
116. I am not in water or in air, but I am in a potato. Peaceful men should praise me, for I end every set-to. Who am I?
—*To (syllable)*
117. The name I had before being born is of no use to me when I am born. If you wait for me, perhaps you shall see me; but no matter how hard you try, you'll never see me today. Who am I?
(Taylor, 97) —*Tomorrow*
118. Mr. One Leg sit in Mr. Two Leg lap,
Mr. Two Leg sit in Mr. Three Leg lap,
Mr. Four Leg came and got Mr. One Leg,
Mr. Two Leg took Mr. Three Leg to make
Mr. Four Leg bring Mr. One Leg back. (Brown, 32)
—*Two-leg man sitting on a three-leg stool, eating a hambone*
119. A man was in a solid, lead room. He had nothing but a long rod and there were no doors, windows or any kind of exit. How did he get out?
—*He broke the rod into two pieces. Two halves make a whole, and he climbed out through that.*
120. A. What will go up the chimney down, but won't go down the chimney up? (Taylor, 1604; Brown, 94) —*Umbrella*
B. What can go up the chimney down, but can't go up the chimney up? —*Umbrella*
C. What goes up, but never comes down? —*Umbrella*
121. A. What runs and runs and never walks,
And has a tongue and never talks? (Taylor, 314, 316, 455;
Brown, 18-9, 31) —*Wagon*
B. What has a tongue, but cannot talk? (Taylor, 316; Brown 19)
—*Wagon*
122. Why did the little moron pass by the medicine cabinet?
—*To keep from waking up the sleeping pills.*
123. As round as an apple, as deep as a cup,
All the king's horses can't pull it up.
(Taylor, 1315, 1317-8; Brown, 68, 71-3) —*Well*
124. If you were to throw a white stone into the Red Sea, what would it become?
—*Wet*
125. What goes all around the house and makes one track?
(Taylor, 174; Brown, 8) —*Wheelbarrow*
126. In at every window and every doorcrack, round and round the house and never a track.
—*Wind*

127. What has panes and no aches? —*Window*
128. What are twins? —*Womb mates*
129. What is one five-letter word that is never spelled right? —*Wrong*
130. What has three feet and can't walk? —*Yardstick*
131. I belong only to you; yet others use me much more than you do.
I was here before you and shall still be here when you are no
longer here. Who am I? (Taylor, 1582-3) —*Your name*
132. What is the coldest place in a theatre? —*Z row*

II. RIDDLES IN SONGS

A. THE RIDDLE SONG

(Contributed by Kenneth Nichols, student at North Carolina State College, from Marion, McDowell County, North Carolina. 1960)

I'll give my love a cherry that has no stone,
I'll give my love a chicken that has no bone,
I'll give my love a story that has no end,
I'll give my love a baby that has no crying.

How can there be a cherry that has no stone?
How can there be a chicken that has no bone?
How can there be a story that has no end?
How can there be a baby with no crying?

A cherry when in blossom has no stone;
A chicken when it's pipping has no bone:
The story of I love you has no end;
And when my baby's sleeping, there's no crying.

Note: Shorter versions of this song are set to music under the title "Captain Wedderburn's Courtship" (Child, 46), IV, 25-6 (12A,B,C), THE FRANK C. BROWN COLLECTION OF NORTH CAROLINA FOLKLORE. It also appears in very similar form (12A) on p. 49 of volume two of this collection. A comparison of the song above with the parallels in the Child and Brown compilations indicates the following likenesses: the essential details in lines 1-2, 5-6, and 9-10, as given above, are the same in both Child and Brown; the phrasing in the Brown version in volume two is much the same, excepting the substitution of *ring* for *story*. Despite these likenesses, there is sufficient evidence in all the versions involved to show the power of the oral tradition in modifying details and style. (Mr. Nichols states that this song is sung by members of his family.)

B. THE DEVIL'S NINE QUESTIONS

(Contributed by T. W. Pritchett, student at North Carolina State College, from Rt. 2, Elon College, Alamance County, North Carolina. 1960)

"Oh, you must answer my questions nine,
Sing ninety-nine and ninety;
As you're not God's you're one of mine,
And you are the weaver's bonny."

"What is whiter than the milk?
Sing ninety-nine and ninety.
And what is softer than the silk?
And you are the weaver's bonny."

"Snow is whiter than the milk,
Sing ninety-nine and ninety,
And down is softer than the silk,
And I am the weaver's bonny."

"O what is higher than a tree?
And what is deeper than the sea?"

"Heaven's higher than a tree,
And Hell is deeper than the sea."

"What is louder than a horn?
And what is sharper than a thorn?"

"Thunder's louder than a horn,
And death is sharper than a thorn."

"What's more innocent than a lamb?
And what is meaner than woman-kind?"

"A babe's more innocent than a lamb,
And the devil is meaner than woman-kind."

"O you have answered my questions nine,
And you are God's, you're none of mine."

Note: This riddle song shows distinct borrowing from "Captain Wedderburn's Courtship," No. 46, in F. J. Child, *ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH POPULAR BALLADS* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1904). Only three of the questions and answers given above are found in the Child versions, namely, those referring to the tree, the sea, and the woman. In the Child versions, however, we find the following line, as modernized: "And the devil is worse than a

woman's wish." Besides these similarities, there are echoes of details in the Child variants, such as *silk*, *horn*, and other structural elements in the song above.

Further comparison of "The Devil's Nine Questions" should be made with "Riddles Wisely Expounded," No. 1 (A, B, C) in the text by Child. These three versions undoubtedly had significant influence upon the oral production of "Captain Wedderburn's Courtship" as well as upon the song given above. Similarities in style and subject matter are obvious in all of the versions involved.

North Carolina State College

NINETEENTH CENTURY OUTLAWS IN ALABAMA FOLKLORE

by

Margaret Gillis Figh

THE MURRELL GANG, Jesse James, Rube Burrow, and Railroad Bill were the outstanding desperadoes who flourished in Alabama folklore of the nineteenth century.

The Murrell gang, who harried the land in the early days of this period, operated in various parts of this state as well as along the Natchez Trace. The following account is based upon their activities in Dallas County.

On Stoutenborough Hill, between Richmond and Selma there is a deep gulch that was the hideout of the slave and cattle-stealing Murrell gang. They passed as preachers and got up a camp meeting with a pretty girl to play the melodeon and sing. While the meeting was in progress the gang would round up the slaves and cattle and carry them off. They were able to train some of the slaves so that after they had been sold they would run away from their masters and meet the gang at their next hideout so that they could be sold all over again.¹

From south-west Alabama comes this tale about one of the Murrell gang, John Copeland.

In the early eighteen hundreds a trading route was opened from Georgia through Alabama across to Natchez, Mississippi. On this route traveled traders, settlers, land speculators and often adventurers.

In the location now known as Walker Springs, Alabama, a man by the name of William Walker opened an inn for travelers on this old route.

Mr. Walker had a lovely young daughter named Elizabeth, and on the particular date that our story begins, Elizabeth and a group of neighborhood girls were together at the inn. As young girls will, they were gaily talking about their future husbands and upon an impulse decided to go look in the well where traditions said the face of their lover would appear. Elizabeth was the first to look in the well, and upon peering into it, she gasped

¹Told by Mrs. Alice Alison Lide, Minter, Ala., July 1949. She lived all her life near Stoutenborough Hill and heard the story in her childhood.

and fainted. When she revived, she told the other girls that she had very clearly seen the face of a man in the well. Of course this was not believed by the other girls, and for a while the incident was forgotten.

Time went on, and one day a handsome young stranger on a sleek, dark horse came riding down the trail and stopped at the Walker Inn. Elizabeth gave one look at him and ran into the kitchen. She was very excited and upset, and told her mother that this was the man whose face was reflected in the well.

The stranger gave his name as James Collins and said that he was a land speculator and trader. Mr. Collins rode away but returned about two weeks later. He asked Elizabeth to marry him. She became his bride and left to make her home with him on the Natchez Trace. Here not far from Natchez James built them a comfortable home.

Time went on, and twin boys were born to James and Elizabeth.

One day during one of James's frequent absences Elizabeth was seated on the front porch watching her babies play. Suddenly she looked up to see herself surrounded by a group of men on horseback. One of them spoke, "Mrs. Copeland, is your husband at home?"

Stunned, Elizabeth replied, "My husband's name is not Copeland. It is Collins."

The man laughed. "Well, Mrs. Collins, is your husband at home?"

Elizabeth told him no, and said he was on a trading expedition and would not be back for another day or so.

One of the men said to her, "Mrs. Collins, I can tell that you are a nice person and a lady, and for your own good you should know this. Your husband's name is not Collins; it is Copeland, and he is a member of the Murrell clan. We know about where he is, and soon will catch up with him."

Now the Murrell clan at that time was notorious in Alabama. It was composed of men of all kinds and from all stations of life. The clan worked along the trade route robbing travellers, stealing horses, cows and slaves and not holding the slightest value to a human life.

Of course, Elizabeth was completely shocked to hear this, and upon the armed man's advice and help, she and the babies returned to her father and the Walker Inn.

Time went on, and Elizabeth heard no word from James.

Then one night while she was sitting up with a sick neighbor and an old negro mammy was keeping the sleeping children, a loud knock was heard at the door of Elizabeth's home. The old negress went to answer the knock and found, standing in the doorway James Copeland.

He spoke quickly, "Where is my wife?"

The old mammy was afraid, but replied, "She ain't here, and you better go on, cause us knows 'bout you and us knows you is a bad man."

James did not pay her the slightest attention, but demanded to see his babies, pushed the old woman aside, and walked in. The twins were asleep in a trundle bed. James stood looking at them for a long time and tears rolled down his cheeks.

Finally he spoke, "Tell my wife that I have deceived her and been unjust to her. Everything they have said about me is true, for I am a Copeland and a member of the Murrell clan. I am afraid that she will never see me again, because the law is after me and I can't escape. I can't even sleep at night for the image of a man on a white horse is constantly chasing me, and I always have to move on. Tell Elizabeth that I love her and the babies."

And with that he was gone.

Time went on, and no more was heard from the handsome Copeland, until one day an old wagoner stopped at the inn for a night's lodging. Elizabeth was serving the tables, and as she worked in and out of the kitchen she happened to catch a familiar name from the wagoner. She listened more closely and heard thus:

"Heard the Murrell clan had a bad day not long ago. Nearly all the Copelands were killed. There was one of them, though, young Jim Copeland, that could have gotten away if the sheriff hadn't overtaken him. Sheriff had just gotten a new horse from Tennessee, a beautiful light gray stallion; ran like lightning. They've got Copeland in a Mississippi jail, and he's to hang soon."

After a family conference Mr. Walker sent Elizabeth's two brothers to the jail to talk to Copeland. Here he fully admitted his guilt. His last word to Elizabeth was an entreaty to bring his boys up as good honest men.²

Another tale of the Copeland gang also contains an element of the

²Told by D. C. Matthews, Grove Hill, Ala., April, 1951. Mr. Matthews' great grandmother's sister was Elizabeth who married James Copeland.

supernatural and has the familiar theme of a stranger rewarding a benefactor for an unexpected kindness.

There was a band of outlaws that operated around Mobile, Alabama, the Copeland gang. This gang was famous for their plundering, robbing, Negro stealing and selling, etc. The leader was a man by the name of James Copeland.

At the same time a man by the name of Colonel Delarge lived in Napoleonville; now that is Spring Hill, Alabama. That was in the last century.

One day when it was raining real hard he was riding in his carriage and saw an old lady walking along the side of the road. He offered her a ride home, and on the way there he noticed a strange, scaly-looking mark on her left cheek, but he didn't say anything about it. Just before she got out of the carriage she told the Colonel that since he helped an old lady that he would be marked and that the Copeland gang would never harm him.

Well, the old Colonel didn't think too much about what she had said, but went home and went to bed. About midnight the rain turned into a storm. Sitting up in his bed the old man saw strange visions of the old woman's face through the lightning. After awhile he was able to go to sleep, but the oddness of everything made him nervous.

When Colonel Delarge got up the next morning and washed his face, suddenly he noticed a funny-looking scaly mark on his left cheek. Well, sir, then he remembered what the old woman had told him, but he still didn't want to believe anything was meant by it. Trying to calm down, he went out to his stoop to get the morning paper. Glancing at the front page, the man saw a picture of the old lady he had ridden home, and in big letters over the picture it said, "Mother of Gangster James Copeland Found Dead."³

There are several tales about Jesse James' activities in the state. One of them, which appears in the Garrett family record, is concerned with his stay with this family in Lowndes County in 1875 while he was recovering from a wound. He posed as a land trader and he spent his spare time cutting wood for poor old women in the community.⁴

According to another story, Jesse robbed the First National Bank

³Told by Frank J. Taylor, Mobile, Ala., April, 1957. This story was popular in Mobile in his childhood.

⁴Told by Mrs. Bell Scarborough, Hayneville, Ala., 1952. The man who was thought to be Jesse James stayed in her father's home when she was a child. There is another version of this story in the Garrett family records owned by Roy Garrett, Montgomery, Ala.

of Huntsville, Alabama, where he had heard that a large sum of money from the sale of cotton had been deposited. He came alone to the town to see how the bank operated. He got a room in a hotel next to the bank and discovered that it was left unprotected at closing time. He robbed the bank and escaped by riding his horse off a cliff into the river. The horse was killed but Jesse borrowed another from some relatives who lived nearby and escaped.⁵

According to the following account Jesse played Robin Hood in Alabama.

On a mild summer day Mr. James was riding his dashing black horse down a lonely country road and he heard the cries of an old woman from a country shack. He discovered that her landlord was putting her out of the house because the mortgage could not be paid. Very modestly and shyly he handed her the required amount and rode on down the road. He stopped his tired horse by a thicket and rested in the dark shadows.

In the meantime, the humble creature met the landlord much to his surprise, with the cash for his mortgage. He started down the road. Very soon he, too, came to the thick bushes by the side of the road. Quite suddenly, Jesse James came out with a black mask on, poked his ugly gun in the ribs of Mr. Landlord and demanded his money.

By lending his money for an hour or two he gave happiness and security to a wretched soul without causing any loss to himself.⁶

Another Alabama story that shows James as the defender of innocent womanhood reveals that, in legend at least, he sometimes was on the side of the law.

There was a man who had deserted his girl for other things and the Law was trying to capture him. The man was between two bluffs. The Law was on both sides but could not get him. About that time another man came along and he asked what they were trying to do. "I'll get him for you," he said. Before no time he had that man captured.

The Law said they sure appreciated his capturing the mean man. This strange man asked the Law what they were going to do with him. The Law said they were going to put him in jail. The strange man said he would give him the punishment.

The strange man got him four stakes and some rope. You

⁵Told by William Phillips, Feb. 1948, Huntsville, Ala.

⁶Told by L. C. Rogers, March, 1948, Montgomery, Ala.

know how bad red ants sting. Well, he found him the biggest ant bed and drove the four stakes down around it and tied the mean man's hands and legs to the stakes right in the middle of the ants.

The strange man asked the Law if they knew who he was. Their reply was, "You are Jesse James because none else would have thought of that form of punishment."⁷

Rube Burrow, an outlaw who terrorized Alabama in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, had many narrow escapes from justice, the most interesting of which was in a croker sack on the back of a mule by a frightened negro.⁸ His aim was so deadly with the two 45's and the Winchester rifle he always carried that railroad engineers whose trains he held up were warned never to shoot at him because he was sure to kill them.⁹

The general attitude toward Burrow is shown in the following comment:

I don't remember much about Rube Burrow. He was a pal of Jesse James and they pulled a train job together one time. Old Rube was very kind-hearted to the poor and was always willing to help out with rations or give the poor some of his loot. He was especially kind to widow-women. Whenever one was wronged Rube would see that everything was put back right again. Rube stuck up a lot of people, but he was friendly with most folks. If he had a grudge against a man he would hunt him down and get satisfaction. He stopped a man who had talked against him and beat the living hell out of him. Then he got back on his horse and rode off leaving the man kicking in the dust. Everybody said the man was might lucky that Rube didn't kill him on the spot.¹⁰

Like Ali Baba's thieves Rube hid his loot in a cave according to a storyteller who says:

The muddy Pea River flows between its shady, snake infested banks not more than three miles from my home. There is a cave a few feet from where we used to fish, known as Robbers Cave. The mouth of the cave, which is barely two feet above the water and half hidden by moss and a willow tree, is large enough for a horse to walk through.

⁷Told by P. L. Holifield, Mobile, Ala., March, 1948.

⁸Told by Louise Williams, Linden, Ala., 1940. There are numerous variants of the Rube Burrow tales in Linden.

⁹Told by Emily Tyler, Linden, Ala., 1950.

¹⁰Told by Amos Knighten, China Grove, Ala., 1956. He said the tale was popular in Pike County in his boyhood.

My grandfather said that shortly after the War Between the States Rube Burrow and his gang used the cave as a hiding place for their loot and when they left, they put a hundred or more poisonous snakes in the cave to protect it. Rube nor his gang were never able to come back for their loot which is supposed to still be in the cave.

Once a man was brave enough to enter, but he never came out to tell about it. The truth remains unknown.¹¹

Most of the stories collected about Burrow deal with his capture and death. The following version is often heard.

A very clever detective was on Rube Burrow's train near Linden, Alabama and with the aid of two negro men with whom Rube was spending the night (against the negroes' will) he was able to capture him. They attacked him when he was asleep. Otherwise they wouldn't have been able to, as he was quick with his guns. Rube was then placed in jail and the sheriff decided to spend the night in the cell with the so badly wanted train robber. Rube had a small bag they had failed to search and at about midnight he spoke to his keeper, told him he was hungry. Rube said, "I have a few ginger snaps in that bag if you don't mind me having them." The sheriff thought it safe as Rube was handcuffed. Rube opened the bag, ate a few gingersnaps and then reached in the bag for more, but this time he came up with a 45. He remarked to his keeper, "Do as I tell you and you will live." The orders were to throw down his guns and release the handcuffs from about Rube's wrists. There was another prisoner upstairs in the jail and when he heard the talk downstairs he went to his window. Rube was out in the yard. The man upstairs opened fire on Rube and Rube took shelter under the shadow of a mulberry tree, but the next morning his still form was lying there.

The detective in plain clothes escorted Rube's body home to his father. He wanted to be present when the father viewed the body so as to be certain it was Rube. When the old broken-hearted dad saw Rube he said, "Ruben, my Ruben. They have killed you son."

Rube Burrow is buried near Mount Vernon in Fayette County and it has been said that he has had three monuments, each having been chipped away by souvenir hunters.¹²

Another story shows that Burrows escaped alive from jail and set

¹¹Collected by Joan Baxter, Elba, Ala., 1950, from her grandfather.

¹²Told by Harry Kimball, Berry, Ala., 1951.

out to get Sheriff Carter, but instead was killed by the Sheriff. It concludes:

The negro Jim and Carter rushed to Burrow as he lay dying. In slow but deliberate tones Burrow said to Jim, "You crossed me Jim. I'll be back to get you."

In about a year following the death of Burrow a cyclone passed through the town of Linden destroying many of the negro houses. The strange thing about the cyclone was the fact that its path followed the same path that was once the trail of Rube Burrow.¹³

Railroad Bill, the outstanding negro bandit of nineteenth century Alabama, often robbed the freight cars and sometimes the passengers on the L. and N. railroad in the southern part of the state. Legends surrounding him have endowed him with heroic proportions. After stealing groceries from the rich railroad he would leave them at the doors of the poor negroes. He could transform himself into a rabbit, a coon or some other animal and escape his pursuers.¹⁴

The following account shows his cleverness in duping L. and N. trainmen.

This notorious robber usually did his work alone and in a bold way. He remained true to form when he robbed the train on its route back to Montgomery from Flomaton. The railroad passed through many pine woods. At one of the thickest areas, Railroad Bill made his bold attack.

Long before the train had arrived Bill made some peculiar arrangements. He made numerous scarecrows on either side of the track. He put a lantern or torch with each dummy. The train was due to come that way at night. As it approached the area Bill had prepared, he lit his torch and stood on the track. When the trainmen saw the torches of what looked like a surrounding force of bandits they thought all was lost. Bill stood there with his torch so the train stopped with his false army standing guard in the woods. Bill robbed the whole train and even unhooked the passenger section and sent the engine on to Montgomery.¹⁵

From Bay Minette, Alabama, comes a tale dealing with Railroad Bill's cleverness in evading his pursuers.

In the days of long ago there lived a person who moved in

¹³Told by Charles Tucker, Montgomery, Ala., Feb. 1951.

¹⁴Told by Ethel Harris, Bay Minette, Ala., July, 1952.

¹⁵Told by Ann Zeenah, Flomaton, Ala., April 1956.

mysterious ways. One night in the eighteen hundreds a Louisville and Nashville train, number two, was held up and robbed right at the point where the railroad crosses Little Escambia River near Flomaton, Alabama. The culprit escaped on a raft which was waiting beneath the bridge over which the train passed. He was seen by fishermen who thought he was the person but none could actually put his finger on him. Railroad Bill was found, however, asleep in a railroad box car by a posse. All of his guns were taken and about the time the officers thought he was completely disarmed he pulled a rifle from his pants leg, thereby escaping again.

He wandered on down to Baldwin County. At Hurricane, Alabama, late one evening an old negro named Rafe Daniels was sitting in the door of his cabin. Rafe noticed a figure coming toward his front gate. Rafe said, "What you doing nigger in my yard?"

He said, "I'm hungry. I want sumpin t'eat."

"Go on nigger," said Rafe. "I aint got nothin' for no sorry nigger."

"You don't know who dis is," said he. "Dis is Railroad Bill."

Rafe's knees began to knock and he became sick on his stomach.

"Yesser, yesser, Mr. Bill, come right in. I was just joking. I've got plenty to eat."

Rafe fixed up a meal and Railroad Bill was soon on his way.

Later on in Atmore Railroad Bill ventured into town, but a trap was fixed for him. Two men had signs fixed when the other would know when to shoot, one man would duck behind the counter. He wasn't given a chance but was shot to death.¹⁵

One narrator says:

His body was exhibited in the colored waiting rooms all up and down the L. and N. railroad in very town from Atmore to Greenville. Each person paid twenty-five cents to view the body. When the body was in Brewton the young son of Sheriff McMillan, whom Railroad Bill had killed, was allowed to pick a few bitterweeds and place them in the mouth of Railroad Bill. The negroes sang a song for many, many years that they had made up about Railroad Bill. They did not believe that he was dead but felt that he was still there to help poor people of Escambia County. During the depression years of the 1930's some of the old negroes felt that the food commodities that

were sent by the Federal Government came from Railroad Bill.¹⁶

Lore about bandits in Alabama runs true to form. They received the aid of supernatural powers and on occasion they were warned by prophetic dreams or signs. They escaped their pursuers by means of their own superior wits. They rendered unexpected kindnesses to the weak and those who had befriended them. They robbed the rich and gave to the poor, and it is noteworthy that often they robbed railroads and banks, two institutions greatly distrusted by the people in their day. In short their folklore careers followed the traditional pattern of the clever villain hero.

Huntingdon College

¹⁶Told by Judge G. A. Peavy who formerly lived in Brewton, Ala., but is now in Montgomery, Ala., 1957.

FAULKNER'S SARTORIS AND THE MISSISSIPPI COUNTRY PEOPLE

by
ELMO HOWELL

WILLIAM FAULKNER MADE the first map of Yoknapatawpha County, Mississippi, in 1936, after he had been writing novels and short stories about it for almost a decade. In Faulkner's own lifetime, Yoknapatawpha has become as much a part of our literary heritage as Hardy's Wessex country or Trollope's Barsetshire. Already the literary minded tourists are making their way to Oxford to inspect the old court house, where the Confederate soldier stands looking in the wrong direction, or to tramp across the rolling countryside where Flem Snopes got his start. "No land in all fiction," says Mr. Robert Penn Warren, "lives more vividly in its physical presence than this county of Faulkner's imagination. . . . The marks of class, occupation, and history are fully rendered, and we know completely their speech food, dress, houses, manners, and attitudes."¹

Faulkner turned to Yoknapatawpha in his third novel, *Sartoris*, published in 1929. It had been a frustrating decade. Because of his aloofness and his refusal to settle down to work after his return from the war, he was dubbed "Count No 'count" by the townspeople, who after all had come to expect the unusual from the Faulkner family.² After an unsuccessful term at the University of Mississippi, he worked for a few months in New York, later going to New Orleans and eventually to Europe. Out of this wandering, and especially out of his experience in New Orleans, came *Soldiers' Pay* and *Mosquitoes*. Both novels are laid in the South, but neither is specifically Southern.

Faulkner came home for the writing of *Sartoris*, and he is quoted as saying that in the midst of it he discovered that writing can be "a mighty fine thing."³ Consequently, *Sartoris* marks a crucial point in Faulkner's career, for it indicates his turning into those familiar scenes

¹The First Peters Rushton Seminar in Contemporary Prose and Poetry, University of Virginia, March 13, 1951. From a copy in the Mississippi Collection, University of Mississippi Library.

²Robert Coughlan, *The Private World of William Faulkner* (New York: 1953), p. 56.

³William Van O'Connor, *The Tangled Fire of William Faulkner* (Minneapolis: 1954), p. 36.

where his genius has found its most natural expression. The writer has to have some place to start from, he says. "It don't matter where it was, just so you remember it and ain't ashamed of it. . . . You're a country boy; all you know is that little patch up there in Mississippi where you started from. But that's all right too."⁴

Among some Southern people, who perhaps have never read or understood his novels, Faulkner has the reputation of a quisling; but there is nothing ambivalent about his attitude toward the South. He reports it as he sees it, and only rarely, in his recent work, does he intrude with his own valuations. However much he may deplore certain aspects of his home country, primarily in his statements to the press since he received the Nobel Prize, there is little doubt of his devotion to it. Quentin Compson's anguished cry at the end of *Absalom, Absalom!* that he does not hate the South—"I don't hate it! I don't hate it!" he insists⁵—has been construed as Faulkner's own repudiation. This is to misunderstand the nature of Faulkner's mind. When, like Quentin, he suggests that he loves, not because but in spite of, he means that his loyalty is no manufactured sentiment but an intimate part of his being.⁶ Everyone knows the story about his going home from the Hollywood studio to finish a scenario, with "home" meaning Mississippi, not the Beverly Hills apartment, as the directors learned when they tried to call him a few days later.⁷ Home to Faulkner means the lot that one is born to, whatever and wherever it may be, even if it is only a "little patch" in a remote and unregarded section of the country. Since his return to Yoknapatawpha in his third novel, he has rarely looked abroad for subject matter.

In his better moments Mark Twain makes a similar use of his own Southern background. His picture of the Grangerford household in *Huckleberry Finn* is unreal, for he could not deal objectively with the Hidalgo element of Southern society. But there is little question about the authenticity of the Phelps farm, the little "one-horse" plantation, where Huck finds Jim imprisoned as a runaway slave. The droning of the bugs and flies on the still, Sunday-like summer day, the fence and the stile, the bare yard with kitchen and smokehouse in the rear, the ash-hopper and big kettle "to bile soap in," the waterbucket by the kitchen door and the gourd dipper, the hound dog asleep in the sun,

⁴Coughlan, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.

⁵*Absalom, Absalom!*, Modern Library edition, p. 378.

⁶William Faulkner, "Mississippi," *Holiday*, XV (April, 1954), 46.

⁷Coughlan, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

and beyond, the cotton fields stretching away toward the woods in the bottom—all are details which evoke elemental human experience.⁸ Faulkner has called Mark Twain the father of American literature,⁹ and he has undoubtedly learned from him, though his use of Southern material has been different. Unlike Faulkner, Samuel Clemens was a man of uncertain loyalties. In his attitude toward his native country there is a strange dichotomy of mind and heart. He was never able, like Faulkner, to make his regionalism intrinsic to some larger purpose. *Sartoris* is a book of folk episodes, luminous with details, which bind all the characters, both black and white of all sorts and conditions, to one spot of earth and to one irrevocable heritage—in a way that Mark Twain never quite realized, or indeed wished to realize.

II

Sartoris is Faulkner's emotional return to Mississippi, and from beginning to the end he is very consciously Southern. It is a book about old people. The protagonist is painfully young, but most readers agree that Young Bayard Sartoris is not a successful character. The book lives because of the old folks: Miss Jenny, Old Bayard, Simon, Old Man Falls, Aunt Sally Wyatt, old Mr. MacCallum, and Dr. Loosh Peabody. Their cheerfulness quite eclipses Young Bayard's grief, which in the long run seems like a rather boyish sort of thing, and makes out of *Sartoris* one of Faulkner's brightest and happiest books.

It opens significantly with a scene between two old men, who sit "shouting periodically into one another's deafness." Old Bayard Sartoris is the head of the wealthy and aristocratic Jefferson family, while his visitor is an old man from the county poor house. Old Man Falls in his clean overalls has walked the three miles into town for one of his short visits with the son of the man under whom he served in the Civil War.

Close ties between people of different classes are common in Faulkner. On the spring afternoon on which the novel opens, Old Man Falls gives Bayard a pipe that Col. Sartoris gave him during the war, because, says the old pauper who is now ninety-three, "a po'house ain't no fitten place for anything of his'n."¹⁰ Yet this frank recognition of

⁸*Huckleberry Finn*, Chapter 32.

⁹*Faulkner at Nagano*, ed. Robert A. Jelliffe (Tokyo, 1956), p. 88. See also *Faulkner in the University*, ed. F. L. Gwynn and J. L. Blotner (Charlottesville, 1959), p. 281.

¹⁰*Sartoris*, Signet edition, p. 28

his status in no way violates the old man's dignity. Most of Young Bayard's friends are country boys of humble origin, and one of them, V. K. Suratt (whom Faulkner later renames V. K. Ratliff), is a share-cropper's son. "I was raised a pore boy, fellers," says V. K., "while Mr. Bayard's folks has lived on that 'ere big place with plenty of money in the bank and niggers to wait on 'em."¹¹ Faulkner's catholic sympathy, his ability to draw together all kinds of people, is remarkable in a time of social discord. Faulkner of course is no meliorist. He has no interest in the revolt of the masses. For this reason, he is, according to Mr. Maxwell Geismar, the best example of "the almost schizophrenic cleft between the gifted individual and his communal existence."¹² But Mr. Geismar, like most American critics of the thirties, did not understand Faulkner's indifference to social reform. "If one begins to write about the injustice of society," says Faulkner, "then one has stopped being primarily a novelist and has become a polemicist or a propagandist."¹³ Through the old people in *Sartoris* Faulkner looks back to an earlier and better time when the sense of community was strong enough in the South to transcend the accidents of race and class.

In his first Mississippi novel Faulkner draws heavily on the prejudices and folk habits of his people. *Sartoris* is a novel about a prominent family of Jefferson, but its most memorable scenes are drawn from the backcountry, with all the rich concreteness of simple human experience. In Faulkner's own time, the T. V. A. has brought radical changes to farm life in his part of the country. The old black pot and the scrubbing board beside the well or spring have given way to the washing machine, as often as not on the front porch among the cane-bottomed chairs. In the drinking scene in *Sartoris*,¹⁴ Faulkner presents an image of country life familiar to all Southerners twenty years ago, when farm people were still living under conditions their ancestors must have known, probably on the same few acres, more than a hundred years ago. Young Bayard drives with two country boys to an isolated hill-country farm outside Jefferson, where the drinking party is to take place. They turn from the main highway "into a faint, rutted wagon-road between a field and patch of woods." The farm house squats "in a clump of sorry fruit trees and a stunted grove of silver poplar

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 134.

¹²Maxwell Geismar, *Writers in Crisis* (Boston: 1942), p. 143.

¹³*Faulkner in the University*, p. 177.

¹⁴*Sartoris*, pp. 128-136.

shrubs"; and beyond it and much larger looms the barn, "gray and gaunt with age," where one of the boys goes for a bottle of whiskey hidden in the loft. A fence straggles "in limp dilapidation" about the barn amid discarded farm tools. The handles of a plow stand at a gaunt angle above the weeds, and inside the lot sits a wagon "with drunken wheels and a home-made bed" beside the rusting skeleton of a Ford car. A cow chews in slow dejection, and upon "the yellow surface of a pond enclosed by banks of trodden and sun-cracked clay," geese drift, "like small muddy clouds." The youth appears from the barn loft with a concealed bottle, jerks his head at the others, and they follow him around the corner of the barn "in waist-high jimson weeds." They slip through the strands of a barb-wire fence and go on into the pasture to a hugh beech and "a clump of saplings." The spring wells from the roots of the beech tree, "into a wooden frame sunk to its top in white sand" that quivers ceaselessly.

The earth about the spring was trampled smooth and packed as an earthen floor. Near the spring a blackened iron pot sat on four bricks; beneath it was a heap of pale wood-ashes and a litter of extinct brands and charred fagot-ends. Against the pot leaned a scrubbing board with a ridged metal face, and a rusty tin cup hung from a nail in the tree above the spring.¹⁵

The boy sets the jug down and the three of them squat around it. Even Bayard knows the country way of drinking, "with the jug tilted across his horizontal forearm and the mouth held to his lips by the same hand, as it should be done." After drinking they wipe their mouths with the backs of their hands. The son of the share-cropper tells how he learned to chop cotton:

My oldest brother taken and put me in the row ahead of him. Started me off, and soon's I taken a lick or two, here he come behind me. And ever' time my hoe chopped once, I could hear hisn chop twice. I never had no shoes in them days, neither. So I had to learn to chop fast, with that 'ere hoe of hisn cuttin' at my bare heels.¹⁶

He tells how old Doc Peabody amputated his grandfather's leg, with the help of a jug of whiskey:

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 131.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 133.

Granpappy laid back on the kitchen table with a demijohn in his hand and a mattress and a cheer acrost his laigs and fo' men a-holdin' him down, and him cussin' and singin' so scandalous the womenfolks and the chillen went down to the pasture behind the barn and waited.¹⁷

As they leave for town again, a woman appears in the kitchen door, "framed by two crape myrtle bushes" and surrounded by geese, and calls one of the boys in a flat country voice. "Going to town," he says. "Sue'll have to milk." The woman does not reply but stands quietly watching the boys until they disappear down the road. Faulkner has the poet's eye for the details of nature, but he seldom reports a natural scene without reflecting obliquely on the human beings who inhabit it. The boy's mother standing in the back door watching forlornly as the youths drive away in the evening suggests somehow not only the isolation of backcountry life but the pathos involved in human experience itself.

There is no posturing on Faulkner's part in rendering scenes like this. He is not the local colorist presenting his natives to a more sophisticated world. The details of his countryside and the simple annals of his poor are so registered in his consciousness and on his heart that he seems to recall them only for his own private gratification. Indeed it may be wondered how many people outside his own section are able to respond to the rich stimuli of his Southernness, for which he never makes allowance for the non-Southern reader. He speaks of baptizings, 'possum hunts, mule auctions, sorghum-makings, hog-killings, and all-day singings as if they were common activities of mankind. How many readers beyond the Yoknapatawpha world can be expected to know about piecing quilts or pitching dollars or chewing sweet gum? How many know about "bobwire" fences and spring branches and fyce dogs and sassafras tea and "cuckleburs" and beggarlice and the smell of jimson weeds in a hog lot? And how many comprehend the Southern countryman's relation to the universe in his deference to "Old Marster"?¹⁸ More than any other of his novels, *Sartoris* is a compendium of Southern folk habits which seem destined to change or disappear as the influence of the cities reaches further into the countryside.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 132.

¹⁸*Ibid.* p. 105. In Faulkner's latest novel, *The Mansion* (New York: 1959), pp. 398, 407, 414, the spelling is changed to "Old Moster."

The MacCallum interlude in Part Four of *Sartoris*¹⁹ is one of the finest scenes in Faulkner, presaging the atmosphere of "The Bear" with its raw winter world of men and animals. After the death of his grandfather, Young Bayard escapes for a few days to the MacCallum place in the northeastern part of the county, where he and his brother went to hunt with the MacCallum boys before the war. It is a gray December day, and Bayard sees from a distance "a pale and windless plume of smoke" standing above the trees, which indicates the MacCallum house. He is greeted shyly by Buddy, the youngest son, who shakes his hand "once limply, in the country fashion," though his hand is hard and firm. The old man, smoking his clay pipe, sits before the fireplace where logs burn the length of a man, lit by pine knots. A "blue-ticked hound" named General lies on the hearth; and his "passel" of pups, half dog and half fox, scamper aimlessly about the room. "New breed I'm tryin'," says one of the boys. They eat supper by the light of a coal oil lamp, sitting on backless wooden benches: "sausage and spare ribs, and a dish of hominy and one of fried sweet potatoes, and corn bread and a molasses jug of sorghum," and coffee poured from a huge enamelware pot. Bayard sleeps in a lean-to room on a huge wooden bed with a shuck mattress, with Buddy in his long woolen underwear; and in the morning he awakes to the sound of a good fire crackling on the hearth. The MacCallum farm is Faulkner's Utopia, a country of tall men with clean minds and pure hearts and nature still in a virginal state of innocence.

Faulkner's intimate knowledge of his country is reflected in his long account of the 'possum hunt, on which even ladies are conducted: the "vulpine, skull-like grin" of the animal and "those tiny, human-looking hands, and the long rat-like tail of it," and finally the ax helve laid across its neck.²⁰ Young Bayard and his wife visit a sorghum mill one evening, where an old Negro stoops over a simmering pot amid "the odor of fermentation and of boiling molasses" and the mule plods "in its monotonous and patient circle, its feet rustling in the dried cane-pith." This becomes the occasion for a Faulkner eulogy on that animal which a generation ago was the mainstay of the Southern economy and which today has all but disappeared:

Some Homer of the cotton fields should sing the saga of the mule and of his place in the South. He it was, more than any

¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 260-285.

²⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 241-248.

other one creature or thing, who, steadfast to the land when all else faltered before the hopeless juggernaut of circumstance, impervious to conditions that broke men's hearts because of his venomous and patient preoccupation with the immediate present, won the prone South from beneath the iron heel of Reconstruction and taught it pride again through humility, and courage through adversity overcome; who accomplished the well-nigh impossible despite hopeless odds, by sheer and vindictive patience. Father and mother he does not resemble, sons and daughters he will never have; vindictive and patient (it is a known fact that he will labor ten years willingly and patiently for you, for the privilege of kicking you once); solitary but without pride, self-sufficient but without vanity; his voice is his own derision. Outcast and pariah, he has neither friend, wife, mistress, or sweetheart; celibate, he is unscarred, possesses neither pillar nor desert cave, he is not assaulted by temptations nor flagellated by dreams nor assuaged by vision; faith, hope and charity are not his. Misanthropic, he labors six days without reward for one creature whom he hates, bound with chains to another whom he despises, and spends the seventh day kicking or being kicked by his fellows. Misunderstood even by that creature, the nigger who drives him, whose impulses and mental processes most closely resemble his, he performs alien actions in alien surroundings; he finds bread not only for a race, but for an entire form of behavior; meek, his inheritance is cooked away from him along with his soul in a glue factory. Ugly, untiring and perverse, he can be moved neither by reason, flattery, nor promise of reward; he performs his humble monotonous duties without complaint, and his meed is blows. Alive, he is haled through the world, an object of general derision; unwept, unhonored and unsung, he bleaches his awkward accusing bones among rusting cans and broken crockery and worn-out automobile tires on lonely hillsides while his flesh soars unawares against the blue in the craws of buzzards.²¹

Faulkner's perceptive critics have recognized the basic conflict in his work between the traditional and anti-traditional forces in the twentieth century South, and by extension in our culture as a whole.²² *Sartoris* is primarily an exultation in what is old and hallowed by tradition and in a way of life that can develop only from a long and close association with the earth; but it is also a subtle attack upon the in-

²¹*Ibid.*, pp. 239-240.

²²George Marion O'Donnell, "Faulkner's Mythology," *Kenyon Review*, I (Summer 1939), 285-299; Malcolm Cowley, Introduction to *The Portable Faulkner*, New York: Viking, 1946; Robert Penn Warren, "Cowley's Faulkner," *New Republic*, CXV (August 12, 1946), 176-180 and (August 26, 1946), 234-237.

novators who would hasten the change from the old to the new. Bayard's motor car, which replaces his grandfather's carriage, is a symbol of the new age; and though a rabbit foot taken "in a graveyard in the dark of the moon" preserves Simon, the Negro butler, Old Bayard dies in the car.²³ The young Negro Caspey has brought back new ideas from the war. "I don't take nothin' fum no white folks no mo'. War done changed all dat. If us cullud folks is good enough ter save France fum de Germans, den us cullud folks is good enough ter have de same rights de Germans is." Caspey, however, carries his insolence too far and defies Old Bayard, who knocks him through the kitchen door with a stick of stove wood. "I kep' telling' yu dem new-fangled war notions of yo'n wa'n't gwine ter work on dis place," the old Negro Simon tells him. "You go'n git dat mare, and save dat nigger freedom talk fer town-folks."²⁴

The new is measured against the old in the portrait of the two Jefferson physicians: young and modern Dr. Alford, with his suave, aseptic waiting room and starchy assistant, whose formal manner cannot hide her country breeding; and old Doc Peabody, a regimental surgeon in the Confederate Army, now eighty-seven years old and weighing three hundred and ten pounds, and altogether committed to the old-time, common-sense way of doing things. Old Bayard has a wart on his face which Dr. Alford wants to remove. Cancer, he says. Old Doc Peabody says no. "Folks got along with cancer a long time befo' they invented knives."²⁵ Later Old Man Falls doctors the wart with a homemade remedy he carries about with him in a tin snuff-box. "My granny got that 'ere from a Choctow woman nigh a hundred and thutty year ago."²⁶ After applying the salve, he tells Bayard the day it will come off. In the meantime, Miss Jenny carries Bayard to Memphis to see a specialist; and while the great man is examining the wart, it falls off in his hand—on the day foretold by Old Man Falls. Three weeks later, Old Bayard gets a bill from Memphis for fifty dollars.²⁷

Sartoris in its own way is a fierce indictment of twentieth century culture; but in dealing with the Sartoris family, which has many parallels to his own, Faulkner maintains a balanced view. The Compsons of *The Sound and the Fury* disintegrate in impotence and idiocy, but the Sartorises are made of sounder stuff. Young Bayard seeks and

²³*Sartoris*, pp. 116, 259.

²⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 73, 89.

²⁵*Ibid.*, p. 101.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 195.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 210.

finds self-immolation, but not before producing an heir for his family. "De little marster done arrive en de ole times comin' back."²⁸ The old members of the family, Miss Jenny and Old Bayard, keep their sanity and hold their own in the modern world; and the general prosperity of the family is reflected in the gaiety and well-being of the servants. There is no Dilsey in the Sartoris household. Moreover, outside Jefferson lie the hills of Yoknapatawpha, where the Mississippi country people pursue their peaceful and time-honored ways. Faulkner does not succeed in fashioning a unity out of the diverse elements of the novel; but, according to Mr. Malcolm Cowley, most of his novels are weak in structure. He is most effective, says Mr. Cowley, when dealing with "the total situation that is always present in his mind as a pattern of the South."²⁹ As a work of art, *Sartoris* is a failure; but it achieves greatness in the realization of character and in the varied instances of Mississippi country life, which are later developed into the Yoknapatawpha saga.

III

Faulkner reports his world with the engaging simplicity of a child. He is honest as the things of the earth are honest. *Sartoris* covers a period of a little more than a year, reflecting through the progress of the seasons—from one spring to another spring and summer—the accommodation of his simple folk to the natural world in its cyclic changes. He has the power of selecting those details which educe the long memories of race and clan and the old loyalties all but lost in the confusing medley of modern life. But his regionalism, which seems so prominent in *Sartoris*, is only his way of getting at some larger truth about his people, and about mankind in general. "Chris'mas gif', white folks," says the old Negro man who wakes Young Bayard on Christmas. Faulkner's unselfconscious use of peculiarly Southern matter may appear as arrogant unconcern for the non-Southerner; but unlike the folklorist, he does not view his artifacts as mere curiosities of a dead culture. It is his mission to preserve the best that the South has to offer and perpetuate it in twentieth century American life. The expression "Christmas Gift," which Faulkner uses frequently, recalls the

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 307.

²⁹Malcolm Cowley, Introduction to *The Portable Faulkner* (New York: 1946), p. 18.

kindliness of old days and evokes a common charity and forbearance, at least during the great season of the year.³⁰

At the beginning of the Civil War, Nathaniel Hawthorne was gratified that the Union was breaking up. "New England," he wrote to a friend, "is quite as large a lump of earth as my heart can really take in."³¹ Today Hawthorne's New England and Faulkner's South are both in danger of being absorbed by that amorphous thing called American civilization. As the sectional differences fade away in the growing current of national life, the Southerner at least should find some comfort in the knowledge that his ways are forever preserved in Faulkner's art. Although Faulkner does not today entertain Hawthorne's hope for a Balkanized America, it is his love for his own "lump of earth" that informs the best of his work. By staying at home to write, he has given his Mississippi country people—the Sartoris, the Compsons, the Snopeses, the MacCallums—an archetypal significance, in a world that is becoming more and more aware of events in Yoknapatawpha County. And only the grudging reader will deny that this accomplishment is a tribute both to the author and to the people he loves.

Memphis State University

³⁰Sartoris, pp. 289, 293; *The Sound and the Fury*, Signet edition, p. 72.

³¹Horatio Bridge, *Personal Recollections of Nathaniel Hawthorne* (New York: 1893), p. 155.

NOTICE

Early in 1906, the executive boards of the American Folklore Society, the American Musicological Society and the Society for Ethnomusicology approved in principle a proposal to set up a Joint Organizing Committee to explore the feasibility of establishing an American Folk Music Council.

The first meeting of the Committee took place in June at the University of California at Los Angeles. A list of members of one or more of the Societies was agreed upon, these people to be invited to 1) form an Advisory Board of 37 members, 2) to become charter members of the Council and 3) to recommend additional members and non-members of the cooperating societies who would be invited to charter membership in the Council. Of the 37, three were not heard from. Of the 168 additional persons named by the Advisory Board—most of them members of one or more of the societies—153 accepted the invitation.

On December 30, 1960, after the annual meetings of the American Musicological Society and the Society for Ethnomusicology at the University of California in Berkeley, the American Folk Music Council was founded. Temporary provisions for its governance during 1961 were adopted and a committee to draft a set of rules of order elected. A comprehensive report of the activities of the Organizing Committee, of the transactions of the organizing meeting and of the plans for development of the Council—including suggestions from Charter Members—will be submitted early in 1961 to the Presidents of the three cooperating Societies for comment and, it is hoped, approval. The report will also be circulated among the charter members of the Council.

The Organizing Committee will remain as a Steering Committee for the year 1961, will revise the report, if necessary, to include such comments, amendments and suggestions as may appear to strengthen the Council, and will arrange for the holding of a First General Assembly of the Council in connection with the annual meeting of at least one of the cooperating societies toward the end of the year.

Ed Cray, *Executive Secretary
For the Organizing Committee*

Austin E. Fife, AFS
Wayland D. Hand, AFS
Sam Hinton, SEM
Mantle Hood, AMS
Charles Seeger, SEM
John Ward, AMS

BOOK REVIEWS

Black Rock; Mining Folklore of the Pennsylvania Dutch. By GEORGE KORSON. Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1960. X, 453p. \$7.50.

In 1949 George Korson contributed one of the major essays, "Coal Miners," to a volume he edited, *Pennsylvania Songs and Legends* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1949; reprinted 1960). It dealt largely with the extensive ballad literature which Korson had recorded in the Pennsylvania mining communities in 1946 and was illustrated by a dozen and a half representative pieces. There was relatively little "legend" in this essay, although other essays in the volume did contain many tales and superstitions.

In his earlier work Korson was probably gravely hampered by spatial limitations, but his new book gave him an opportunity to record formally his rich collectanea. His source material is so extensive, however, that even here he complains of lack of space for "use of more of my field of recordings." (It might be worthwhile to note that the University of Kentucky Press has found a workable solution in the Microcard for handling field notes and sources too bulky to be set and printed letterpress).

There is a great deal of historical background, and properly so, for this study of the folklore of the century and a half of anthracite industry in Pennsylvania. Korson examines carefully the known facts about Philip Ginder, alleged to have been the discoverer of the first reported anthracite outcropping in 1791; and he also traces the subsequent history of the anthracite industry up to the final paralytic stroke caused by the depression of the thirties. His book is as much of a social history of the coal-mining regions of Pennsylvania as a record of the folklore of these parts.

Actually only the latter half of the book deals strictly with folk tradition. The last eleven chapters bear these titles: Miners' Bread, Shanties and Possession Houses, Miners' Trails and Trains, Folk Speech—The Dutch Dialect, Courtship and Marriage Customs, Folk Medicine, Religious Love, Spooks, Spoofs, and the Devil, Love of Breaker Boys and Mule Drivers, Legends and Traditions, and Folk Songs and Ballads. The work is fully indexed.

Korson's careful documentation reveals a comprehensive knowledge and use of printed and manuscript sources of Pennsylvania history.

He leans heavily on newspapers and "mug books," and the foreign reviewers can only assume that he used them as critically as his generally judicious use of oral sources indicates.

It is, perhaps, a bit ungracious to ask for more from an already meaty volume. However, in view of the motley array of nationalities (among others Slovak, Croatian, Welsh, Irish, English, Scottish, Cornish, Hungarian, Italian, German, and Negro) attracted to the mines of Pennsylvania, it might have been worthwhile to attempt some comparative studies. Even in allegedly "Anglo-Saxon" Eastern Kentucky there are folk beliefs which are intimately related to certain European tradition and, one suspects, also to the traditions of the Pennsylvania anthracite country. In Blackey, Kentucky, a coal miner reported that his wife (whom he married in Germany in 1919) would throw burning coal into the bathwater of her infants (*cf.* J. M. Gassner, *Aus Sitte und Brauch der Mettersdorfer*, Programmschrift, Bistritz, 1902, p. 15, and Paul Sartori, *Sitte und Brauch*, 3 vols., Leipzig, 1910-1914, I, 24). In Hazard a headache can be alleviated and common colds and gonorrhea cured by drinking a bowl of water in which three burning coals, mined by the sufferer, have been extinguished (*cf.*, the same belief about burning wood embers: V. Fossel, *Volksmedizin und medizinischer Aberglaube in Steiermark*, Graz, 1886, pp. 65, 86, and, for Transylvania, S. Seligmann, *Der böse Blick und Verwandtes*, 2 vols., Berlin, 1910, II, 95 *et seq.*). Recently I have picked up a variety of legends in Beattyville about supernatural dwarfs in abandoned mine tipples, a subject about which there is a rich central European tradition. Lutz Mackensen records over 125 references to this subject in his article on "Bergeister" in the *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*, I, 1071-1083.

The fact that the "Pennsylvania Dutch" are revealed by Mr. Korson for the first time to have played a major rôle in the anthracite industry suggests the need and feasibility of more attention to European parallels, since the traditions of this particular group have been extensively recorded in the literature. We may also earnestly hope that Mr. Korson and others whom he may inspire will extend these investigations to the moribund coal mining areas of West Virginia and Eastern Kentucky; for much of the miners' tradition will be irretrievably lost in the "Little Kentuckies" of Dayton, Detroit, and Chicago in another generation.

LAWRENCE S. THOMPSON

University of Kentucky Library

German Folk Tales, Collected and Edited by the Grimm Brothers,
trans. by FRANCIS P. MAGOUN, JR. and ALEXANDER H. KRAPPE.
Southern Illinois University Press, 1960. 674 p. \$10.00

The importance to folklorists and to students of comparative literature of that vast corpus of tales commonly known as *Grimms' Fairy Tales* is so great that no comment is necessary. Scholars know that without this collection, which the brothers Grimm saw the necessity of making while the informants were available, the very discipline of folklore, especially in the area of the folktale, would be of much narrower scope than it is. And the layman, who has been nurtured on at least some of the famous tales the Grimms gathered from oral tradition and from early printed versions, knows, or at least senses, that he is dealing with something precious, something that forms a considerable part of western European cultural backgrounds.

Many translations of the tales have been made, but none before the present one, has been complete. The fact that the tales have been always considered as a part of the literature of children is largely responsible for this. As a matter of fact, over 75 percent of the tales were created for adults, are unattractive to children or even repel them. The Grimms themselves lived to regret having made a part of the title of their collections the word "*Kinder*" in *Kinder und Hausmärchen*.

It is a pleasure to report that at last there exists a translation of the entire body of the tales, translated into English by two scholars who, perhaps better than any others, were qualified to carry out this work. They have preferred to use the title *German Folk Tales*, thus avoiding the use of the word "fairy," which has so long placed the stories in the realm of children's literature. They offer all the two hundred regular folktales, as well as the ten additional or supplementary *Kinderlegenden* (religious tales for children).

This volume will be of exceedingly great value to folklorists and students of comparative literature, all too few of whom these days find it easy to read German, and even for those who read it well, there are difficulties in the Low German in which many of the tales are couched. Add to this the many words, most of which are even archaic, from the Hessian dialect, and the problems of reading accurately in the original are evident. The translations, accurate as to meaning, are set forth in a simple and unpolished style that comes close to preserving the flavor of the tales as the Grimms transcribed them. The collection will be

attractive, too, to the general reader who will find in its pages old favorites, as well as some tales he certainly missed when as a child he read Grimms' Fairy Tales. Some he will shudder at, for some are truly bloodcurdling (*Brother and Sister*, which tells of suffocation, or *The Girl Without Hands*, where a father cuts off his daughters hands).

There is no more than a very short introduction, but since the literature on the tales is so vast and is available in most libraries, it seems permissible to dispense with it. There is a convenient index, both for the English titles and for the German.

The format of the book is most attractive and the binding very serviceable. Southern Illinois University Press is to be congratulated and praised for presenting both to the general public and to the scholar a long needed and very readable book.

JOHN ESTEN KELLER

University of North Carolina

THEORY

The first part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the general theory of the problem. It is shown that the problem can be reduced to a system of ordinary differential equations. The system is then solved by the method of variation of parameters.

The second part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of the special case of the problem. It is shown that the problem can be reduced to a system of ordinary differential equations. The system is then solved by the method of variation of parameters.

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